o Ba'th Socialist Party

THE ARAB HOMELAND AFTER WORLD WAR II

Elias Farah

Unity Freedom Socialism

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Editor's Note

The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party regards all Arabs as being part of one nation both in the cultural and spiritual sense. The different countries in which they live, make up a politically and economically united fatherland. In the Party's documents, 'the Arab fatherland' means all the Arab countries. Each of these is a 'qotr' which, literally translated, means country; in the Ba'th context, it should be read as province or region. The adjective 'Quotri' (provincial, regional) is used when referring to an individual country. The adjective 'qawmi' (national), on the other hand, is used when referring to all the countries which together make up the one fatherland. Thus, the National Directorate deals only with matters concerning the whole fatherland. Each Regional Directorate deals with matters within its own country. As for example, the Lebanese or Jordanian Regional Directorate, etc.

The word Ba'th can be translated as meaning revival, resurgence or renewal. Hitherto, resurgence seems to be the meaning which is preferred by Arab intellectuals and foreign Arab experts.

Introductory Note on Method

It is a rather difficult, not to say risky task to attempt a study of the development of Arab society in the post-war (1945-1975) years. It is no less difficult a task to try and determine the impact of the Second World War on the way things shaped up in the Arab world, and to assess the effect this may have on the prospects of war and peace in to-day's world.

Source material, relevant data and reliable statistics are not exactly over-abundant. Hence the difficulty and element of risk in proceeding from the data-collecting stage of research to the demanding business of collation, analysis, induction and deduction that must precede any possible uncovering of the basic laws which govern the development of Arab society in the present phase of Arab history.

The very scope of our enquiry and the rather long period it attempts to encompass, present additional difficulties and complexities.

It was necessary, however, to accept the challenge posed by such difficulties. It was equally necessary, in view of the many obstacles, pitfalls and paradoxical situations involved, to select a method that was certain to minimize the margin of error without forcing the researcher to sacrifice any part of the common boundary between academic enquiry and the logic of a work of revolutionary scientific research that deals with concrete reality.

This was due to reasons which we may sum up as follows:

1. At some time or other, during the War years, most of the Arab countries became theatres of war. The countries of the Arab Maghrib (northwest Africa), namely Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, as well as Lybia, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine and Yemen, became involved, to a greater or lesser extent, in military operations. The strategic positions of those countries and the fact that each and every one of them was, in one way or another, under the outright colonial domination, mandate, or in the sphere of influence of some European power (Britain, France or Italy), when the War broke out, made their involvement in that War unavoidable.

2. Arab society, in all the Arab countries, was poised to embark upon a new phase of development. It was ripe for change when the War broke out, towards the end of the thirties. Therefore, the interaction of the factors of change within Arab society, when confronted with the situation created by the War, had far-reaching effects on the aspects of its post-war development.

3. To the Axis countries, the War may have been

a Fascist crusade. To the Allies, it may have been an anti-Fascist counter-crusade. To the Arab nation, however, and to all the countries which were engaged in the struggle against Colonialism, the War had a dual nature. To them, it was a war against both sides, Fascism and Colonialism alike. From the point of view of those oppressed nations, there was no contradiction in this. Both the Fascists and their adversaries were a threat. Precedence had to be given, however, to the struggle against the major and more imminent of the two threats: Fascism.

4. A new world did emerge after the Second World War. Alongside that new world and within its framework, the Arab national liberation movement came of age and evolved a fresh organization based upon a new intellectual approach.

5. In order for us to be able to pause and examine the immediate post-war period, in the Arab context, we had to devise a means whereby we could escape the vacant areas into which historical and sociological studies on the Arab world (especially those which attempt to deal with politics and ideology) are apt to lurch. That is to say, we had to adopt a method that would circumvent the absence of any authoritative and exhaustive study or work of scientific research capable of grasping and defining the most significant phenomena, transformations and contradictions of the Arab world in the post-war years and, on the basis of an analysis of the present-day challenges and forces which confront the Arab liberation movement, predict the probable future trends of its development.

To determine our method, we had to take into account a number of considerations, foremost among which were the following:

1. The Arab nation was not directly concerned with the War. It was simply under the thumb of the colonial powers and, as a result of this, its territories became theatres of war and large numbers of its nationals became cannon fodder in that war.

2. The position of the Arab nation in relation to the war situation cannot be studied outside the context of the historical phase through which it was passing: of necessity, our frame of reference had to be the stage of development attained by Arab society in the pre-war period. It was in the course of that period that the Arab nation embarked upon its renaissance. It experienced self-awareness and took cognizance of the contradiction between its past and present. While the world was moving closer to the Second World War, the Arab nation was experiencing this awakening and was weighing its condition against its potential and aspirations.

3. The coincidence of the War and the stirrings of birth of the Arab liberation movement created the intellectual and material climate which was to connect this renaissance with the world's destiny and the major issues of the age.

4. The post-war period set out very clearly the postures of the various ideologies, peoples and political regimes in every continent over the issue of peace and war. The historical and political framework of Arab society's development has, therefore, become an integral part of the development of the Socialist and National Liberation worlds which constitute the forces

of real peace. It is in the building of a world of real peace and in defence of its gains that all the struggling nations participate.

In view of the foregoing considerations, it was both natural and logical that we should take as our main starting point the fact that, in the case of the Arab nation, the War did not represent, as it did with regard to those nations which were directly involved in it, a new phase of life or even a principal and crucial indicator of development. Rather, the War, to the Arab world, was but a significant factor of global dimensions its end results, both positive and negative effected Arab society which, at that time, was in the throes of a certain phase of development that brought it face to face with its numerous and basic contradictions. It has to be borne in mind that those contradictions criss-cross in a web whose strands, internal and external, private and public, old and new, determine the historical context of Arab society within the larger context of the development of our contemporary world in the aftermath of a world war that was a real test of destiny.

Hence, it was necessary to adopt the condition of the Arab world as our cardinal point of reference. That is to say, we had to determine the Arab world's position in relation to the War, and not the opposite.

It was also self-evident that we had to deal with the Arab condition vis-à-vis the war variable in the chronological order reflected in the sequence of the four chapters of this study, namely:

— The pre-war period
— The war years

— The post-war period

— The future dimension, as extrapolated from the indications of war and peace.

The universal Arab outlook, which embraces the whole of the Arab world and views as a whole the issues of its liberation, unity and socialist transformation, has provided the general guiding framework of this enquiry. On the other hand, the dialectical linking of the effective factors in the development of Arab society is the fabric into which we have combined and woven the processes of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction that stemmed from the examination of the statistical postulates and comparison of the data in the reports of various committees.

Determining the positions of the various aspects of development in Arab society in relation to world development in the course of the various phases which followed upon one another before and during the forties, was also one of the basic elements of our method.

Lastly, it is needless to underline the fact that no scientific dialectical-historical method could hope to deal with the various phenomena of Arab development without relating such phenomena of their imperialist concomitant and the system of production out of which the preceding phase had originated and which thus determined the nature and direction of such development. Therefore, the Imperialist-Zionist reactionary alliance which plays the leading role in opposing and distorting Arab development constitutes one of the principal areas on which our enquiry focused throughout its four chapters.

The foregoing are the distinctive features of the method adopted in this modest attempt, which strives to achieve a deepened awareness of the Arab condition and to consolidate the Arab struggle in the quest for real national peace, namely a peace based upon unity, freedom and socialism. This is a quest that cannot be isolated from the search for real world peace, since the latter cannot be anything else but the liberation of the world's peoples and their right to self-determination. It is the path of scientific revolutionary Socialism which liberates men, nations and the world at large from the factors of alienation in which the causes of war have always been rooted.

Chapter One

The Arab Homeland in the Pre-War Period

The pre-war period of Arab history was an era of colonialist domination. The Arab homeland was almost entirely under the sway of the colonial powers. Every aspect of life, be it political, social, economic or cultural, bore the imprint of that domination.

Up to the beginning of World War I, the countries of the Arab Mashriq (East) and Maghrib (West) were under two types of foreign rule: the old Ottoman domination which came to an end with the fall of the Ottoman Empire, and the Western colonialist sway which was extended to the Arab Mashriq when the British and French took over the ex-Ottoman colonies, from the Mediterranean to the Arabian Gulf. The Arab homeland was thus engulfed, once more, in a tidal wave of colonialism and the European powers achieved the goals they had striven for all along. For a long time past they had been trying to infiltrate and undermine the Ottoman Empire with every means at

their command: from the so-called "capitulations", to loans, investment, export of capital[1], banking ventures, missionary activities and the imposition of the protectorate status on every part of the Empire they could lay their hands on. By the end of the war, the Arab homeland had, at last, dropped in their laps, like a plum.

Thus the Arab renaissance, which was in the process of emerging in the latter half of the 19th century and the turn of the twentieth, reflected what amounted to a response to the major challenge posed to the identity and future prospects of the Arabs as a nation. The problem was that the foreign powers which took over the Arab homeland were not content with physical occupation, oppression and exploitation. The very fabric of the Arab national character became a prime target and every stirring of awakening was ferociously opposed and stamped out. The attempts at turkification, in the Mashriq, under Ottoman rule, were to be outdone by the attempts at frenchification in the Maghrib, the unremitting efforts of the British in Palestine and the determined drive to italianize Lybia. The colonial powers, each in its own sphere, were engaged in perfecting and carrying out what amounted to a grand design which aimed at fragmenting the Arab nation, widening and deepening its rifts, parcelling out whole parts of its territories for despoilation, severing any remaining

1. The amount of capital exported by Germany to the Ottoman Empire, for instance, was in the whereabouts of DM 500.000.000, over and above the German debt which was near that figure.

(Lukasz Hirszowicz: *The Third Reich and the Arab East,* Arabic translation, p. 12, Cairo, 1971.)

links with its past, frustrating any ambition the Arabs may have had to better their lot and closing the circle of their isolation from the mainstream of progress in the modern world.

Another outcome of the colonialist endeavour in the Arab world was the total subjugation, after World War I, of Arab society in all the countries of the Arab homeland, to the capitalist system. The Arab countries were turned into minor satellites which moved in orbit, out there in the periphery, round the "planet" which was one or the other of the major European capitals. Every sector in the social structure of every Arab country (bedouin, rural and urban) was systematically subjected throughout the colonial era, to every imaginable form of colonialist manipulation and exploitation. Naturally enough, feudalism and tribalism were nurtured and given a marked social ascendancy. There was a substancial rise in the ratio of population in the bedouin and rural sectors over the urban centres[2]. Moreover, colonialism fostered a type of clannish society which was mainly characterized by division. The clannish communities were deliberately alienated from one another and encouraged to isolate themselves from the urban centres of

2. Statistics cited by Dr. M. S. Hassan in his *Studies on the Iraqi Economy* (Al-Talia'a Publishing House, Beirut, 1966) indicate that the population ratio in *Iraq* of the bedouin sector in the years before World War II was about 7% as against 68% in the rural and 25% in the urban sectors.

In the case of *Egypt*, the statistics of the *Central State Organ for Statistics* (1966) show that 72% of the population lived in the rural areas and 28% in the cities. There is no mention, however, of the bedouin sector which is predominant in the desert areas between Egypt and Lybia.

population. Worse still, the superimposition of these patterns on the structure of society led to the absence of the division of labour, in the modern sense of the world, from the rural communities and the perpetuation of obsolete and primitive modes of production. The emergence of either a working class or manufacturing industry capable of satisfying the domestic needs of development was effectively baulked. The gap between the urban and rural communities widened, illiteracy was rife and women were relegated to a status that ruled out any possibility of positive involvement in society.

Due to the balancing off of birth and death rates, natural population increase in the Arab world was very slow in the pre-war period. Another outstanding feature of the Arab homeland's demographic experience, in those years, was the substitution of populations. Numbers of Arab nationals were emigrating, especially from Lebanon, Syria and Egypt, to various destinations in South America and Africa, while an inflow of colonialist and zionist settlers was channelled by colonialism into various parts of the Arab homeland, especially the Maghrib countries and Palestine.

Not content with political segmentation, colonialism also resorted to social fragmentation. The existence of ethnic and religious minorities was seized upon by the colonial powers and ruthlessly exploited in fomenting social discord and the creation of chronic minority problems for every Arab country. Those minorities were encouraged to embrace political, social and economic objectives that ran counter to those of the majority. The alien settler minorities

were given a foothold and encouraged to grow: the French minotiry, in Algeria, and the zionist, in Palestine. Religious bigotry and confessional strife were also instigated and encouraged. On the whole, the national aspirations of the ethnic minorities were distorted and made to run counter to the Arab liberation movement. In certain instances, those minorities were lured on to rebellion, as in the case of the Kurdish and Assyrian movements in Iraq and the Negro movement in the Sudan.

Colonialism also did its best to disrupt all the means of inter-Arab social communication. This was contrived mainly through the demarcation of borders and the erection of customs barriers between the Arab countries. The colonial powers also encouraged the plurality of cultures and fostered isolationist tendencies among the opinion-makers in the news and information media.

Even the physical means of communication and transport facilities which were built under the pressure of strategic necessity, such as the Damascus-Medina "Hijaz Railway", were not kept in repair once the First World War was over. Airports remained as primitive as ever and were subject to the colonialist code which governed cultural contact between the Arab homeland and the advanced world. Aerial contact between the Arab countries and the outside world was limited in such a way that every Arab capital had access by air only to the capital of the occupying colonial power.

The Arab economy in the pre-World War II period was not only dependent upon and annexed to the setup of capitalist-colonialist system, but was also

unidimensional, fragmented and out of joint. Britain and France, having carved up the Arab world between them in the San Remo* and Sykes-Picot (1916) agreements (later to be exposed by Lenin in the wake of the October 1917 Revolution), worked hand in glove with the American interests, which had infiltrated the oil sector, in furthering the alienation of the Arab countries from one another. The predominant aspect of Arab trade in those years was total subjugation to the monopolistic control of a number of foreign companies which became the sole beneficiaries of all the domestic commodity output of such staples as oil, cotton, coffee, agricultural produce and animal products.

In order to ensure this, Arab trade was made to fit the pattern of colonialist planning which dominated the mechanisms of the Arab market. One consequence of this was the insignificance of the Arab countries' share of the inter-Arab market in comparison with the volume of their trade with the foreign investment centres.

Colonial domination also enabled the foreign companies to manipulate market forces, such as supply and demand, in a manner that perpetuated the subjugation of the Arab countries' vital economic interests to those of the colonial powers. This, of course, resulted in a continued drop in the price levels of commodities which constituted the major part of the Arab countries' export trade, and a continued rise

* The mandate over Syria and Lebanon was "entrusted to France" on 26 April 1920, at the San Remo meeting. The instrument of the mandate was drawn up in London on 24 June 1922.

in the prices of their imports of manufactured goods and equipment from the colonial powers. Needless to say, the inevitable outcome was a chronic and ever-increasing balance of payments deficit which crippled the economies of the Arab countries.

Colonialism had a particularly adverse impact on Arab education. Not content with the narrowing of education opportunities in a way that virtually excluded working class and peasant children, or the veritable war it waged on the historic centres of indigenous culture, colonialism geared the few (mostly missionary) schools it allowed to exist, to the dubious process of turning out generations of graduates so imbued with belief in the colonial power's culture and admiration for foreign values that they were sure to become faithful lackeys of the colonialist system and forever remain cut off from their national heritage and the aspirations of their people.

Education, on every level, was geared to the achievement of such colonialist objectives. However, when publicly discussed, those targets were sugar-coated in such ambiguous generalities and high-sounding abstractions that the colonialist schemes they were designed to serve were made to appear so improbable and far-fetched as to become incredible. Nevertheless, the targets of education, as depicted by such generalities, could not be farther from the true nature of the practices and systems of education which, with their curricula, administrative setups and text-books, were blatantly subservient to the interests of colonialism and oblivious of Arab interests. No great deal of acumen was needed to realize that such targets had nothing to do with the "proper upbring-

ing of the new generations on the physical, moral and intellectual levels" which was the avowed mission of education according to the statutes of the Education Ministries of most Arab countries.

Moreover, the declared educational objectives focused on the individual and his distinctive personality rather than the community or the individual social self. They also favoured cramming and the committing of facts to memory at the expense of developing the mind and forming the character of the student.

On the whole, the colonialist criteria of education favoured the pursuit of classical knowledge in preference to the acquisition of manual and/or professional skills. Worse still, those criteria and the guidelines which emanated from them fostered a mentality characterized by division and a personality that was cut off from its history and lacking in patriotic sentiment, originality and the sense of identification with the people.

The system of education in every Arab country was modelled and completely dependent upon the archetypal educational setup of the occupying colonial power. Consequently, educational systems and standards varied greatly, before World War II, from one Arab country to the other.

In the north-African parts of the Arab homeland (Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia), the language of instruction was French and the system of education a conform copy of the French system. The rancour of colonialism against Arabism was such that the colonial authorities in Algeria declared Arabic "a foreign language" .A relentless war was also waged against the indigenous educational and popular institutions

which survived the first colonial onslaught, in Algeria and Tunisia (occupied by the French in 1830 and 1881 respectively).

The Italian occupation authorities in Lybia adopted the same approach in the areas of culture and education.

In Iraq, the Monroe Commission (1932) report made it clear that the aim of education was to enable students to cram and pass school examinations. The ultimate objective was employment in the civil service.

Similarly, the 1933 Education Act in Syria and the whole setup of education in Egypt reflected the colonialist outlook which prevailed in the field of education with regard to targets, administration, syllabuses, text-books and overall planning.

Education in most Arab countries was of a rather vague and general nature. In most cases, it did not go beyond the primary stage. Socially, it was rigorously limited to the sons of the privileged few. Secondary schools were few and far between: only three in South Yemen and just one in Saudi Arabia.

Inter-Arab cultural relations were virtually non-existent. A single cultural agreement between two countries existed in all the Arab world, namely the 1935 Egyptian Iraqi convention on the employement of teachers. Obviously, this was a facet of the determined colonialist drive to weaken inter-Arab ties. A very special effort was made by colonialism, in that direction, with regard to intellectual and educational exchanges between the Arab countries.

The doling of education to the Arabs was made the very special preserve of administrative bodies whose staff were hand-picked by the colonial authori-

ties. The task entrusted to those bodies was the meticulous implementation of educational policies commensurate with the overall colonial policies which manipulated the destinies of the Arab countries. The selection of personnel to staff those omnipotent educational bodies was not governed by such objective criteria as academic qualification, specialization, professional experience or even good reputation. It was a totally arbitrary business. As a matter of fact, oppressive arbitrariness was the overriding feature of the supervision of education in the Arab countries at that time. Teacher training and the policy governing educational missions abroad were subject to the strictest possible control on the part of the colonialist authorities.

Vocational education was almost non-existent in most Arab countries[3]. The same applied to university education. Universities were to be found only in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco. Some of those were ancient religious universities, such as "al-Zaitouna" in Tunisia, "al-Qairawan" in Morocco and "al-Azhar" in Egypt. These universities, the oldest in the world, are survivals of the great centres of higher education which flourished, in the

3. The first trades school was opened in Iraq in 1871, Algeria (1877), Lybia (1898) and in Lebanon under Ottoman rule.

Agronomy schools followed a little later: in Syria (1910), Iraq (1926) and Palestine (1931).

In the area of business education, Egypt had over a thousand students in 1920.

Legislation relating to vocational education was enacted after World War I: in Lybia (1919), Iraq (1929) and Egypt (1935).

All trades schools in the Arab countries existed to serve the forces of occupation.

hey-day of Arab civilization, in Baghdad, Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo and Alexandria.

Side by side with this type of traditionalist university which focused on Islamic studies, there existed a diametrically opposed type of university, namely, the foreign missionary institutions, such as St. Joseph's and the American University in Beirut. Needless to say, such institutions were the tools of educational policies which were missionary in general concept and, in practice, directly geared to the interests of foreign occupation.

Lastly, there existed what may be called the "official" type of university modelled upon the Western institution. Throughout the pre-war years, the main emphasis, in those universities, was on the academic study of the humanities. Even though they limited their field of academic endeavour to such a "harmless" pursuit, those Arab universities did not escape the attentions of the colonialist authorities. They, too, like the schools, were turned into education mills which masss-produced hordes of "effendis" or "muwazzafeen" for the civil service. The highest colonialist priority was given to the raising of barriers between university and society, the alienation of those centres of learning from the areas of patriotic and national endeavour and their immunization against libertarian tendencies.

All this, however, was not deemed sufficient from the colonialist point of view. The armed forces (such as they were) of the Arab countries were brought under the thumb of colonialism and the usual methods of division and fragmentation were applied with greater determination. The Sudanese and Egyptian

armies were separated in 1925. The two armies had formed a unified force, up to that date. The Jordanian Border Force (whose commanders were all British) replaced the Palestinian Gendarmerie, in 1926. Jointly with the Turkish army, the French occupied the Iskenderoun province, in 1939. The Tunisian army, with the exception of some 600 troops retained as a special guard of honour for the Bey, was disbanded as soon as Tunisia became a French protectorate. The modern armies of Jordan, Iraq and Egypt were diminished in numbers under the colonialist treaties concluded with the governments of those countries in 1921, 1932 and 1936 respectively. At the same time, internal insurgencies were instigated as a means of diverting those armies from the performance of their national tasks. The first Barzan movement in 1932 was an example of this.

These were but a few of the aspects of colonialist policy vis-à-vis the Arab armies in the pre-war period. Obviously, the thing which colonialism dreaded above all was that, some day, those armies may unite their forces and, worse still, open their ranks for "infiltration" by the sons of the working and peasant classes. This, colonialism feared, would have become a sure recipe for effectively involving the Arab armies in the dreaded process of Arab awakening.

The foregoing may help throw some light on the way things were with regard to the political scene in the Arab world before World War II. Colonialism and the zionist movement were keeping a close watch indeed on the movement of Arab renaissance. They both felt that the slightest stirring of Arab awakening represented a direct threat to their vital interests.

Hence their unholy alliance which came to light on November 2nd, 1917, in the form of a letter addressed by Arthur James Balfour to this "dear lord Rothschild", wherein the latter was advised that "Her Majesty's government viewed with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people" and that H.M. government were commited "to use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of that object".

Twenty years earlier, right after the first zionist congress in Basle (August 1897), Herzl was said to have received intimations from German colonialism, through the Grand Duke Friedrich von Baden, that Kaiser Wilhelm II "was ready to assume protectorate powers over the new state"[4].

Thus it was that the political existence of the Arab world continued to bear the imprint of the First World War throughout the period which preceded World War II. The first of these two world wars had torn the Arab world apart, portioning it out between Britain and France in line with the Sykes-Picot deal. It also dealt a devastating blow to the mainstream of Arab nationalism which had been brought to maturity by the covert activities of secret societies and the activism of political organizations in the pre-war years. That mainstream of Pan-Arabism had first manifested itself in the movement of al-Charif Hussein and his son, Faisal, against Ottoman rule and their call for the establishment of a united independent Arab state. The Sykes-Picot agreement was, among other things, a treacherous stab in the back of al-Charif

4. Lukasz Hirszowicz, op. cit. pp. 13-14 (Arab Ed.).

Hussein and his movement. It exposed the perfidy of British and French colonialism. Charif Hussein and his son paid with their lives for trying to unify the Arab homeland: the first in Hijaz and his son in Damascus, in 1920.

The pre-World War II period also witnessed the revival of German interest in the Arab world. It was not long after Germany was allowed to resume its seat in the League of Nations (1926) that German colonialism was on the look-out for openings in the Arab markets. It was able, in fact, to find such an opening in Egypt. Not long after the initial contacts were made, the balance of trade between the two countries reached the then imposing figure of DM 80.000.000.

Italy, too, entered the arena. Despite its many scandals in Lybia (which had become an Italian colony in 1911), it tried hard to pose as a friend of the Arabs. Among other things, it supplied Iraq and Saudi Arabia with weapons when Britain, which was busy rearming in the latter half of the thirties, cut off arms supplies to both countries.

The Italians also took the initiative of concluding a treaty with Yemen. All this was part of an Italian scheme to infiltrate the Arab world and expand as much as possible the area of Italian colonialism in a part of the world which has always been a common denominator in the ambitions of colonial powers.

It was only natural that the impact of such a complex situation on the politics of the Arab world should lead to the emergence of ruling regimes, movements and political parties which were, in effect, manifestations of the various ideological influences to

which the Arab countries were exposed and the community of interests that existed between those ruling regimes and political parties and colonialism, both old and new (Fascist).

Thus, the anti-colonialist movement in the Arab homeland found itself up against the closed ranks of a ring of internal and external foes. Those formidable enemies were, on the one hand, colonialism with all the power of its armies and business empires, and, on the other, the domestic exploiter classes which had allied themselves to colonialism, as well the alien cultural influences which were foisted off on the Arab countries as a means of stifling, in the hearts and minds of most Arab intellectuals, the sense of patriotism, popular belongingness, national awareness and the capability of ever developing a progressive outlook.

That was the reason why the movement of the masses in most Arab countries usually took the shape of sudden volcanic eruptions and armed rebellions which took place, more often than not, in the rural areas. With the exception of Egypt —which experienced the stirrings of a working-class movement that, incidentally, was most ruthlessly repressed— none of the Arab countries had a working class of sufficient social weight that could make its workers a force to be reckoned with. This rather spontaneous phase of Arab history, which lacked planning, organization and revolutionary ideology was, therefore, characterized by a series of regional revolutions[5] that kept

5. The 1919' revolution in Egypt, 1920 in Iraq and also in 1920 the Emir Khalid's movement, the 1924 revolution in Sudan, 1925 in Syria, 1934 in Tunisia and 1936 in Palestine.

erupting in various parts of the Arab homeland.

The dialectics of conflict between colonialism and a liberation movement of such a popular spontaneous character influenced all the economic, social and intellectual aspects of Arab life. The alliance of the domestic feudal and capitalist classes with foreign capital and the colonial powers, in most Arab countries, had far-reaching effects on the class structure of Arab society and deeply influenced those countries' class and national consciousness. That alignment had the effect of ranging the majority of the Arab people (the workers, peasants, soldiers and intellectuals) on one side, and the ruling exploiter classes with their ally, colonialism, on the other. This led to the cementing and strengthening of the oppressed and exploited classes' alliance and threw into bold relief the need for new political parties capable of reflecting and striving after the two major national and class objectives of liberation and independence.

However, all this, positive as it may have been, still lacked the vision which could apprehend Arab reality in its totality and a penetrating awareness that could encompass its basic contradictions. There was also the need for a clear-cut definition of the means of struggle and the tools capable of coping with the requirements of Arab renaissance and dealing with the forces which stood in its way and conspired against it. The political forces which emerged in the course of that period embodied many of these deficiencies of pre-war Arab society.

On the whole, we can sum up the general characteristics of that period as follows:

1. The omnipotence of colonialism and the fact

that Arab society was influenced by the development of the capitalist system.

2. The prevalence of backwardness in all three (bedouin, rural and urban) sectors of the social structure of the Arab homeland and the higher ratio of population density in the bedouin and rural sectors.

3. The predominance of feudalist relationships in the rural areas and the relative growth of capitalist relationships in the cities (initially, among the commercial middle class and, eventually, among the industrial bourgeoisie).

4. The emergence of the working class and the rise of a middle class of small propietors, owners of small businesses, professionals, intellectuals and patriotic elements among the military.

5. The diffusion of liberal, socialist and fascist ideologies concomitantly with the growth of the national awareness and the thrust of independence and liberation tendencies.

In the light of the foregoing, we can discern the main characteristics of the political parties which were thrown up by the conditions prevailing in the Arab world in the pre-war years.

Most of the political parties which emerged in the Arab countries between World Wars I and II were manifestations of the ideological influences to which the Arab intellectuals who completed their studies in the West had been exposed. Some of those intellectuals were strongly attracted to the bourgeois democratic formula. Others fell under the spell of fascism, while some were influenced by social democratic

thought or gravitated to one or the other of the marxist formulas.

In most cases, however, the Arab facts of life were not the starting point of those who opted for this or that ideology. Rather, the intellectual allure of those ideologies was the decisive factor. Consequently, the most frequent pattern was one of transcription and imitation which, by its very nature, could only scratch the surface of Arab reality and apply to it, rather mechanically, formulas of analysis which were valid and acceptable only in the case of the advanced industrial-capitalist societies from which they were imported.

The October Revolution had a tremendous effect on Arab society. However, the sheer weight of colonialist domination depressed that influence into a state of dormancy. Consequently, it did not penetrate social thinking on a mass level until much later. Though the communist parties which emerged in the course of that period did try to propagate socialist ideas, the dissemination of such thought remained within the narrow confines of certain segments on the intelligentsia, a few enlightened workers and members of the toiling classes and the circles of ethnic and confessional minorities, all of whom did not represent the mainstream of the struggling Arab masses. Notwithstanding, there were strong indications that the constitutional, liberal and moderately nationalist ideologies which dominated political thought in some Arab countries during the twenties and thirties because they were the ideologies of the West and were quite convenient for the ruling classes which ran the political and social lives of those countries, did find,

in the mid-thirties, a strong competitor they had not reckoned with. They were no longer alone and undisputed in the arena. New currents of European political thought, such as socialism, fascism and marxism, began to make inroads upon the established patterns of social and political thinking, especially in the case of the intelligentsia.

It is also noteworthy that most Arab countries experienced, in the course of the period under review, escalating waves of anticolonialist struggle. A number of general characteristics appear to have emerged as common attributes of those countries and the political parties which were involved in the struggle for political independence. Those common attributes may be summed up as follows:

1. The unanimity of all national forces, regardless of class identification, ideological differences and diversity of motives and interests, in combating foreign occupation.

2. The emergence and growth of a national sensibility coupled with a patriotic non-socialist awareness.

3. The predominance of the regional outlook over the independence movements. The leaderships of those movements focused on the achievement of political independence for their countries separately from the others and not in a Pan-Arab context.

4. The growth of feelings of sympathy and solidarity between the regional Arab movements, as in the case of the national movements of Syria, Lebanon and Egypt; Egypt and Iraq and the countries of the Arab Maghrib.

5. The supremacy of the bourgeois elements in

the leaderships of the political parties and other organizations.

6. The dawning prominence of the middle classes through the role played in politics by numbers of intellectuals, army officers[6] and the leaderships of various movements and political parties.

7. The ascendancy of the educated elite in politics at the expense of wider and more effective participation by the masses.

8. The paucity of political parties; their rather impoverished political background, the negligent stand of the bourgeois led political parties on the social issues of their countries and their deliberate dissociation of the struggle for independence from the quest for social change and non-capitalist development. The progressive parties, on their part, ignored the relationship which linked the struggle against colonialism with the concept of Arab unity and the struggle against the partition of the Arab homeland.

The following types of political parties existed in the Arab world in the course of the phases we have been discussing:

1. Parties of a liberal persuasion

Those were the parties which embodied a certain range of Western influences, from the principles of

6. A number of factors combined, over the years from 1936 through 1939, in bringing about an expansion of the Egyptian army. This led to the entry into the armed forces of hundreds of the sons of the peasant and working classes. These were later to become the nucleus round which Nasser's 1952 revolution evolved, after the war.

the French Revolution to the experience of modern Western regimes, as well as a number of constitutional and libertarian tendencies. They were, on the whole, the parties of the bourgeoisie, such as "al-Wafd" (The Delegation), in Egypt (1919); "al-Kutlah al-Wataniyah" (The National Bloc), in Syria (1925); the opposition "al-Nahdha" (The Renaissance) and "al-Watani" (The National) parties and the ruling "al-Horr al-Iraqi" (The Free Iraqi) party, in Iraq (1922); the patriotic "al-Mu'tamar" (The Congress) movement, in the Sudan (1936), which was an offshoot of "Nadi al-Kherrijeen" (The Graduates' Club) founded in Umm-Dorman in 1918 and "Hizb al-Sha'b" (The People's Party), in Algeria (1937).

2. Parties of a Religious Fundamentalist Persuasion

Examples of this type of party were: "al-Shubban al-Muslemeen" (The Muslim Youth) Society, which had centres in Iraq, Palestine and Syria; "al-Ekhwan al-Muslemeen" (The Muslim Brotherhood) founded by Hassan al-Banna in Egypt (1932), a political movement which aimed at the establishment of a theocratic state; "al-Kata'ib" (Phalanges Libanaises), a Maronite sectarian movement which emerged in Lebanon in 1935 and "al Najjadah", a Sunni sectarian movement which also emerged in Lebanon, one year later (1936).

3. Nationalist Parties

Those were the offshoots of the secret societies and other movements which, from the latter days of Ottoman rule, called, in a rather vague way, for Arab unity. The nationalist ideas of those secret societies had interacted with the movement of al-Charif Hussein, the proclamation of the independent Arab State in Syria (7 March 1920) and its collapse at the hands of the French occupation after the battle of Maisaloun (27 July 1920).

"Al-Ittihad ad-Dusturi" (The Constitutional Union) party was formed by the Syrians in Cairo (1921) to provide a base for nationalist activism. It was followed by the emergence of The Executive Committee for the Syrian-Palestinian Congress (1921-1927) and, later, by "Usbat al-Amal al-Qawmi" (The League for National Action) which, in the thirties, called for total Arab unity. "Nadi al-Muthanna" (al-Muthanna Club) emerged in Iraq in the same period.

4. Regional (Localist) Parties

This type of political party rejected the concept of Pan-Arab belongingness, tried to fabricate "philosophical" justifications for the partition of the Arab homeland into separate entities and claimed that there were Arab nations and not a single Arab Nation. Examples of this type of party were the Pharaonic movement in Egypt, the Phoenician movement in Lebanon and "al-Hizb al-Qawmi al-Suri"

(The Syrian National Party) which was inaugurated in 1932.

5. Socialist Parties

These were political groupings of a socialist-patriotic persuasion, such as "al-Ahali" (The Indegenous Populace) group in Iraq (1931), the group of Abdul-Rahman Shaheed, Ibrahim Haddad and Abdullah al-Ala'ily, in Syria and Lebanon, in the thirties, and some of the wings of the Wafd Party, in Egypt. These groupings combined political activism and social reformism within a legally accepted constitutional framework.

There also existed a number of marxist communist parties, such as The Lebanese Comunist Party (1924), The Syrian Communist Party (1924) and The Algerian Communist Party (1930).

It is evident that the political life of the Arab homeland was characterized by an unequal struggle between a nascent Arab liberation movement which was just barely able to give some sort of concrete expression (of a rather nebulous nature) to the stirrings of Arab awakening and the colonial powers which had on their side the advantages of military superiority, an established settler presence in a number of Arab countries, the weight of a number of political and military treaties with the governments of those countries and their overall political, economic and cultural sway over the Arab homeland.

Despite this preponderance in favour of colonialism, however, and notwithstanding all its might and scheming vis-a-vis a nascent Arab liberation movement that was a long way off from maturity, the struggle of the Arab people did succeed in frustrating and aborting an attempt which was made just before the war (1936-1939) to set up a zionist entity in Palestine. The popular Arab revolution in Palestine forced Britain to publish its May 17, 1939 White Paper.

The efforts of the British zionist, Major Wingate, the Malay guerilla warfare expert, to train zionist fighters capable of defending the zionist settlements failed. Belief in Arab right was stronger than all the modern weaponry of colonialism and the rabid aggressiveness of the zionist onslaught. All that British colonialism was able to achieve was the creation of the Jewish Settlement Guard, which was to become the nucleus of the Haganah, in readiness for the post-war period and the eventual realization of the colonialist-zionist aims in Palestine.

In all the Arab countries, colonialism was facing fierce resistance which, despite its spontaneity and lack of co-ordination, was beginning to make itself felt.

On the party level, however, a defect that was more serious than spontaneity and lack of co-ordination plagued the political life of the Arab homeland. This was the ideological vacuum which resulted from the lack of a properly applied scientific historical/dialectical method in the analysis of Arab reality and the historical phase it was passing through. The absence of such a method was most detrimental to Arab

struggle. Without it, the political groupings engaged in that struggle failed to link their liberation struggle against colonialism with class struggle against those internal social forces which were its domestic allies in the Arab homeland. They also failed to realize that the struggle for Arab unity was the essential prerequisite which must provide the proper historical framework and objective conditions without which there can be no real freedom, independence or socialism, for the Arab Nation.

At the same time, Arab political life suffered the effects of an organizational vacuum which resulted from the acceptance by the political parties and groupings as a whole of the regional localist outlook, their acquiescence in the fragmentation and partition of the Arab homeland imposed by colonialism and the fact that they were content with a mere organic level of national cohesion that did not base itself on a truly revolutionary organizational theory.

In addition to all this, the Arab homeland suffered the effects of what we may call a "mass vacuum". This resulted from the fact that the political parties and groupings which emerged in the pre-war period were not oriented towards the toiling masses of the Arab homeland as a whole.

However, awareness of this shortcoming and the increasingly demanding requirements of Arab renaissance placed the Arab liberation movement in a position which favoured swift and far-reaching interaction with the events and resultant currents of the new phase which set in with the beginning of the war years. Hence the outstanding impact of World War II on the Arab homeland.

Chapter Two

Impact of the War on the Arab World (1939-1945)

The Arab area (i.e. the Middle East and north-west Africa) was a major theatre of war. This was brought about by a number of strategic factors, foremost among which were the huge oil reserves of Iraq, the Arab peninsula and the Arabian Gulf.

Though the sources at hand do not provide any exact figures of Arab casualties in the Second World War, we still have Sir Winston Churchill's praise[7] for their role in the Allies' victory to indicate the undeniable contribution of the Maghrib countries which became, one and all, major theatres of war, and the role of the other Arab countries, such as Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Palestine.

Palestine, Trans-Jordan, Kuwait, Bahrain, the other Gulf countries, the Sudan, Aden and parts of

7. Churchill's History of World War II, Vol. II (the correspondence exchanged between Churchill and the Syrian president). Also: «The Arabs and the West» by K. Worsch.

Somaliland were under direct British occupation, while the ruling regimes in Iraq, Egypt and Saudi Arabia were under the British thumb. Notwithstanding, the attempts by Britain to involve the Iraqi and Egyptian armies in her war efforts were not successful.

The rest of the Arab countries (Syria, Lebanon, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and part of Somaliland) were under French occupation. Hundreds of thousands of North-African Arabs from the Maghrib countries were forced into the service of France's war machine, at its military bases and on the battlefields of North Africa, Europe and the Far East.

In addition, Libya was under Italian occupation.

The US landed her forces in Maghrib in 1943. Many American airfields were built in those territories, in addition to the bases built in Libya and Saudi Arabia.

The Soviet Union had no direct links with the Arab world during the Second World War[8].

The Arab world passed through two main phases in the course of the war:

1. The first, which started with the outbreak of the war, came to an end with the stopping of the two convergent forces of the pincer movement through which the Axis tried to occupy the Middle East. The first arm of that pincer was stopped in the last

8. Ismail A. Yaghi: *The Movement of Rashid Ali al-Kailani. The Development of the Nationalist Movement in Iraq,* Dar al-Taliaa, Beirut, 1974, refers to the exchange of legal recognition between the "National Defence Government" and the Soviet Union, in 1941.

Alamein battle, in October 1943 and the second, a month later, in the Caucasus.

In the course of that phase, fascist influences were making strong inroads upon political thought in the Arab world. Their impact was particularly strong on:

a. the non-socialist anti-colonialist nationalist movements;

b. the anti-colonialist religious sectarian movements and:

c. the regional localist movements which adopted ideologies and organizational structures deriving from fascist origins.

Misr al-Fatat (Young Egypt) party, led by Ahmad Hussein and the *Syrian National Party* founded by Anton Saadeh, were the two outstanding examples of the fascist influences which were particularly strong during that phase.

Misr al-Fatat raised the slogan of "Egypt Above All", called for the formation of a "Pharaonic militia", worked hard to promote pro-Axis sentiments and led the Cairo demonstrations which so incensed the Allies with the chanting of such slogans as "Onward Rommel!"[9]

The *Syrian National Party,* on the other hand, held the belief that "the Syrian nation is a racial and psychological exclusive reality"; that "the Syrian people are characterized by a marked superiority which stems from a homogenous racial makeup that enabled them to create a highly advance material and

9. Abdul-Azim Ramadan: *Development of the Nationalist Movement in Egypt,* Beirut, 1973.

spiritual culture"; that this creative ability was "related to the constitution, physical attributes and inherited biological traits of the Syrian people"; that humanity was "divided into superior and inferior races" and so on[10]. The party built its organization along the lines of fascist militias and considered its founder, whom it had accepted as the "leader" for life, as "the redeemer, leader of the true faith, teacher, man of providence, apostle, man of vision and man of destiny".

Both movements (*Misr al-Fatat* and the *Syrian National Party*) had many things in common. They were both regional and localist in outlook. They both refused to accept the existence of an Arab nation and each glorified a given region of the Arab world at the expense of the Arab whole, in direct opposition to the Pan-Arab movement which, at that time, was embarking upon a new phase of development that linked the concept of Arab unity with socialism. Both movements shared a marked hostility towards socialism. Their third common attribute was the ambiguity of their stance towards colonialism as a general phenomenon which constituted the basic contradiction in that phase of Arab history.

Side by side with these two movements which were strongly influenced by the ideology and practices of fascism, there emerged, in Egypt, the theocratic *Al-Ekhwan al-Muslemeen* (Muslim Brotherhood) movement which borrowed from western fascism the two canons of "discipline and obedience" as a basis for

10. Quoted from Anton Saadeh: *The Rise of Nations, The Ten Lectures* and *Dogma Interpretations.*

its terrorist organization. Its para-military formations and the unabashed admiration expressed by its Grand Master, Hassan al-Banna, for Hitler and Mussolini, whom he counted among the leaders of modern awakening in Europe[11], showed a clear bias in favour of the Axis. There was one clear-cut difference, however, between that movement and the two previously discussed, namely, its uncompromising hostility towards colonialism and the struggle it waged against British occupation during the war.

The same phase witnessed two significant events in the Arab world. The first was a movement that flared up in Iraq under the leadership of Rashid Ali al-Kailani and a number of Army officers of a Pan-Arab persuasion, whose nationalist outlook was tinged with religious sentiment. The other was the movement in Egypt of Aziz al-Masri and a group of Army officers who believed in Pan-Arabism and sympathized with the move of their Iraqi counterparts. The common denominator between the two groups was their hostility towards British colonialism and sympathy for the Axis. This sympathy stemmed, however, from patriotism and a libertarian nationalist outlook rather than any fascist intellectual or political affiliation.

The sordid history of Western colonialism which tore the Arab homeland apart, almost extinguished Arab indentity in certain parts of the Arab world and did its best to pave the way for the takeover of Palestine by international zionism, was bound to generate a great deal of bitterness, resentement and

11. Abdul-Azim Ramadan: op. cit., p. 306.

hostility. This sort of feeling naturally led certain sectors of Arab public opinion to sympathize with the Axis in the belief that "my enemy's enemy is my friend". People who felt that way in the Arab world hoped that a swift victory for "the other side" would rid the Arab world of the stranglehold of colonialism.

This explains the full popular support in Iraq for the May 2,1941 movement by Rashid Ali al-Kailani and the widespread national response it aroused in the Arab world, especially in Syria and Egypt.

2. The second phase through which the Arab world passed in the course of World War II was initiated by the reverses suffered by fascism and gathered momentum with the recession of the fascist tide, the retreat of the Axis forces, the failure of the Rashid Ali al-Kailani movement in Iraq and Aziz al-Masri's in Egypt. The conflict between the Arab liberation movement and Western colonialism moved on to a new plane towards the end of 1943.

What actually took place was that, for the first time, the contemporary Arab awakening manifested a positive aspect. It was no longer a mere reaction to colonialism, the segmentation of the Arab homeland and the backwardness which caused the Arab nation to lag far behind, but a positive movement of liberation, renewal, inner revival and free congress with the development of the socialist world. From the moment the militant identity of this Arab awakening transcended the state of being a mere reaction to colonialism and its attendant evils, its anti-colonialist, anti-zionist stance was coupled with an anti-fascist

outlook. Mr. Michel Aflaq, founder of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, put it this way:

«The question which faced the Arab generation that shouldered its Pan-Arab responsibilities at the outbreak of World War II was whether or not the Arab Revolution had to be a historical (i.e. genuine) revolution»[12].

Once the Arab liberation movement transcended the status of mere reaction to the negative aspects of Arab reality, namely colonialism, decadence, exploitation and backwardness, to the higher level of a genuine liberation movement that gave expression to a militant, cultural human identity, it came to the realization that fascism was no less a threat than colonialism. Having realized this, it abandoned the fascist slogan "Arabism Above All' and evolved a new socialist concept of Pan-Arabism which was manifested in such slogans as: "That which is right is above Arabism until Arab unity is achieved through adherence to that which is right»[13]. In short, Arabism was no longer defined negatively as in the following statement by Salah al-Din al-Sabbagh, the Chief of Staff of Rashid Ali al-Kailani's movement:

"I do not believe in the democracy of the British, the nazism of the Germans or the bolshevism of the Russians»[14].

12. Michel Aflaq: *The Battle of the One Destiny,* 5th Ed. p. 198.

13. Michel Aflaq: *For the Sake of Resurrection,* 7th Ed. p. 108.

14. Salah al-Din al-Sabbagh: *The Knights of Arabism in Iraq,* p. 1.

Arabism evolved its own revolutionary ideology, namely, the theory of unity, freedom and socialism, whose broad outlines emerged in the course of that second phase. Both colonialism and zionism were well aware that the Arab nation had embarked upon a stage of genuine revival. Hence, they made haste to stand in its way. British colonialism renewed its attempts, during World War II, to pave the way for the creation of the Jewish zionist state. It organized the Jewish Brigade, which was, in effect, a whole division that the British trained and equipped with the then latest weapons. The war itself was seized upon as a pretext to throw wide open the doors of inmigration to Palestine for thousands of Jewish military personnel from Eastern Europe. Furthermore, the Jewish Agency was given huge quantities of surplus military equipment. At the same time, the British stopped all arms supplies to the Egyptian army during the war, as they realized that that army was going to be the strike force of the patriotic movement and rising popular tide, in Egypt and other Arab countries, against colonialism.

Not content with this, however, colonialism used the Jordanian Army, commanded at the time by British officers, against the Iraqi army, during the movement of Rashid Ali al-Kailani. It resorted to other devious means to distract the Arab armies of Egypt and Iraq from the principal task of confronting colonialism. The Egyptian army underwent intensive counter-insurgency training. It was to be kept busy "quelling insurgency" in the Sudan. The Iraqi army was kept busy preparing for the defence of Iraq's north-eastern border "against a Russian attack". A

few insurgencies were actually thrown in, for good measure: the second Barzani movement, in 1943, the third, in 1945 and the fourth, in 1947.

This second phase, which lasted till the end of the war, was a stage of preparation for the creation of the zionist state. Parallel to this, a determined effort was made to absorb and contain the then emerging Pan-Arab unionist current through the launching, in 1945, of a totally inadequate formula of Arab co-ordination which the world has known under the name of the League of Arab States. The aim of this concerted colonialist drive was to create the conditions conducive to the perpetuation of colonialist influence and imperialist domination for as long as possible. Colonialism wanted to safeguard its strategic position, continue its capitalist plundering of the Arab world and opposition to the Arab liberation movement.

These, then, were the political aspects of that phase. With regard to the other manifestations of the war's impact on the Arab world, we may note the following:

1. The war's impact on the three main facets of Arab reality namely, the *geographic,* which has to do with the land and its nature, the *cultural,* which has to do with attitudes, ideals, customs and social behaviour and the *national,* which has to do with major strategic objectives, was quite considerable. The concepts of time and place, the notion of renewal and resurrection and the common view of the masses and their role, all underwent a process of transformation and maturity in the course of the war years. The

swift happenings of the war, its stunning upheavals and its global scale helped in speeding up the initiatión of a new crucial phase of Arab awakening, and paved the way for significant developments in the structure of Arab society and the way the Arab nation saw itself and the world about it.

2. Due to *the discovery of oil* in the Arab homeland before World War II, the Arab area became one of the most coveted in the world, as a result of the war and its exigencies and the fact that, it contained the largest proven oil reserves in the world.

3. The *demographic* structure of the Arab homeland underwent a significant development during the war. There was a shift of population growth from the bedouin and rural sectors to the urban. In Iraq, for instance, the shift was as follows[15].

Year	*Bedouin*	*Rural*	*Urban*
1930	7%	68%	25%
1945	5%	57%	38%

In Egypt, the shift followed the same pattern[16].

1937	—	72%	28%
1947	—	67%	33%

15. Mohammad Salman Hassan: *Studies in the Iraqi Economy*, Dar al-Taliaa, Beirut, 1966, p. 72.

16. The Central Organization of Mobilization and Statistics, Egypt, *Population Growth in Egypt*, Cairo, 1966, p. 115.

4. The *resources* of the Arab world, many countries of which became theatres of war, were harnessed to the allied war effort during World War II. Arab national production, especially in the areas of oil, food-stuffs and strategic materials, was geared to the exigencies of the war. Britain, for one, dealt with the Arab territories under its control as a single economic unit and created institutions to coordinate the channelling of their resources to the service of its war effort, such as "The Middle East Supply Office".

5. It was in the area of *education,* however, that the impact of the war on Arab society was most acutely felt[17]. Educational targets in a number of Arab countries (Iraq, in 1941, and Syria, in 1944, etc.) passed through a significant transformation which went hand in hand with the resurgence of the new currents of liberation and independence.

6. In the area of *primary education,* statistics indicate that the annual rate of growth in the number of male pupils attending government schools fell, in most Arab countries, over the years from 1939 through 1945, with the exception of Lebanon and Kuwait, to 1.3%. Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan were the countries most effected by this negative trend. In the schools of the private sector of education, however, the rate was slightly better at 1.8%. In the case of foreigh schools, the rate was 1.4%.

17. All figures herein quoted re education derive from tables and statistical data included in various government committee reports.

In the case of *females attending primary education,* the annual rate of growth over the same period was very sluggish in government schools (1%), rather vigorous in the schools of the private sector (7.7%) and middling in foreign schools (3.2%). The ratio of female to male pupils in the primary stage varied from 18 to 30%[18].

The annual rate of growth in the number of primary school teachers was 2.9% in the case of government schools, 6.3% in the schools of the private sector and as high as 13% in foreign schools.

The ratio of primary school pupils (male and female) to the total population, varied from one Arab country to the other: 3-24 pupils per thousand.

7. In the area of *secondary education,* Syria, Egypt, Iraq and Libya made a number of attempts to reform their systems of education and improve the syllabuses with a view to emphasizing the patriotic and Pan-Arab content of education as a whole. The colonial authorities, of course, did their best to reverse the trend wherever they could. In Libya, for instance, the Arab curricula of the few existing Arab schools were suppressed an replaced with alien syllabuses. However, the attempt met with resolute Arab resistance on the part of the public and government officials alike. This forced the colonial authorities to beat a hasty retreat. Similar attempts were made in other Arab countries, such as the Sudan, Algeria and Morocco.

18. This ratio related to government schools. In the case of the private sector schools, the ratio was 80%, in Lebanon, 32%, in Syria and from 16 to 20% in the rest of the Arab countries.

In the course of the war years, a number of reform laws were enacted in the Arab world with the aim of freeing Arab education from its dependency on the systems of education of the colonial powers. Law No. 40 of 21 December 1944 was enacted in Syria. The Act of Public Education (1940) and Law No. 14 of 1944 were promulgated in Iraq. A number of education commissions were set up in Egypt, in 1945, to draft a reform bill. This was an initiative taken at the behest of a conference convened at that time by the Egyptian Teachers' Association.

In the area of *quantitative growth,* the annual growth rate in the number of secondary school pupils during the war years was as low as 5.1%. This was particularly noticeable in Morocco and Tunisia. In Egypt, Syria and Iraq, however, the rate was slightly higher.

It was noticeable, on the other hand, that the annual rate of growth in the number of *female students,* over the 1939-1945 period, was rising in relation to the overall growth of the total number of students: from 11.9%, at the beginning of the war, to 16.8%, at its end.

The annual growth rate of the number of students attending private (domestic and foreign) secondary schools was relatively hight (22.5%) during the war years. However, the overall ratio of students attending secondary schools (both government and private) was rather low during the war: 2.1 per thousand, at the outbreak of the war (1939/1940) and 3.5 per thousand in the academic year 1944/1945.

Moreover, the ratio of education allocations in the ordinary budgets of the Arab states tended to con-

tract during the war years. The biggest allocation channelled to education in the state budget of any Arab country, in 1940, did not exceed 12.5%. By 1945, it had dropped to 10.5%. The lowest was 2.5%, in 1940; by 1945, it had dropped to just 1%.

8. In the case of *university education,* it is worthy of mention that the Education Act passed by the Syrian Parliament in 1944 proved to be an instrument of cultural independence. It had far-reaching effects on university education and resulted, among other things, in the establishment of the High Institute of Teacher Training which supplied the secondary schools with highly qualified teachers. A Higher Education Act was also promulgated in Tunisia, in 1945.

The Arab homeland acquired only one new university during the war years. This was *the University of Alexandria* (1942), which was added to the nine Arab universities already in existence since before the war[19]. In the case of the faculties, their number rose from 33, in 1939, to 49, in 1945, i.e. 16 more faculties in all. The number of faculties offering courses in the humanities increased from 15 to 22, while the number of those offering courses in the natural sciences rose from 18 to 27.

The number of undergraduates (male and female) rose from 10.322, in 1939, to 16.433, in 1943. That is

19. al-Zaitouna University, Tunisia, est. 732 A. D.; al-Karawiyyin Morocco, 859; al-Azhar, Egypt, 970; The American University, Beirut, 1866; The Algerian University, 1879; St. Joseph's University, Beirut, 1881; The Egyptian University, Cairo, 1908; The American University, Cairo, 1919 ant the Syrian University, 1924.

to say, the benefits of higher education were being made available to 28 out of every 100.000 of the total population. Previously, those facilities were available to 19 only out of every 100.000.

The number of *female undergraduates* increased from 450, in 1939, to 707, in 1943. The overall ratlo of undegraduates attending university education to the global number of students in the Arab world remained constant at 43% during the war years. The number of university graduates (male and female) rose from 1205 to 2062, i.e. an increase of 71% from 1939 to 1943. The number of teaching staff in higher education, in the Arab world as a whole, rose from 605, in 1939, to 840, in 1943.

9. In the area of *vocational education* (i.e. trades, agronomy and business), a number of laws were enacted during the war whereby the regulations governing this type of educations were more clearly defined. In Egypt, Law No. 102 relating to schools of business education* was promulgated in 1945. In the same year, the law governing vocational education (originally enacted in 1935) was amended, in Egypt. Law No. 14 of 1943 was enacted in Iraq whereby a directorate of vocational education was established in that country. In 1942, decree No. 295 was issued in Lebanon defining the qualifications of teaching staff and inspectors in the area of vocational education.

On the whole, there was a continued natural

* Usually called "commercial schools". This type of school offers courses in book-keeping, business practices and secretarial specializations.

growth in that type of education during the war years, despite a number of occasional recessions in the case of certain vocational specializations due to the closing down of some schools and their conversion to other areas of trades education, in line with the military requirements of the forces of occupation. There was also a gradual decline in vocational education enrolments as a whole and a corresponding rise in the number of students seeking places in higher education.

10. In the case of *female education,* the ratio of female pupils in primary education was slightly affected in the countries which became involved in the war. As a consequence of this, the overall ratio[20] for the Arab world fell from 37.43%, in 1940/1941, to 35.29%, in 1943/1944. This ratio remained more or less constant throughout the last year of the war (1944/1945).

The ratio of female students in vocational education to those attending secondary education fell from 39.49% to 17.40% over the same period and dropped further, to 10.81%, in the academic year 1944/1945.

11. In the area of *inter-Arab cultural relations,* there emerged a tendency towards rapprochement and increased cultural interaction between the Arab countries, thanks to the conditions created by the war. A treaty was concluded between Egypt and Iraq, in 1945, which regulated the delegation of Egyptian

20. The statistics cited relate to Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Libya, Kuwait and Tunisia.

university professors to work in the field of higher education in Iraq. The treaty also provided for the arabization of syllabuses, exchange of students and standardization of scientific Arabic terminology.

An agreement was concluded in the same year between the Egyptian and Syrian ministries of education which provided for the delegation of Egyptian university professors to work in the field of higher education in Syria[21].

It was also during the war (in 1941) that the Association of Arab Medical Societies was established. The first conference of Arab lawyers was held in Damascus, in 1944 and the first meeting of Arab engineers took place in Alexandria, in 1945.

It is evident from the foregoing that the impact of the Second World War was pervasive in most Arab countries. It initially resulted in a surge of fascist tendencies which were later to fade out. On a more positive level, however, it speeded up the crystallization of the general objectives of contemporary Arab awakening and conclusively decided the fate of many tendencies in the Arab world. It strengthened the unionist urge among the Arabs and contributed to the development of their national awareness. The war years also brought home to the Arab nation the real significance of that global conflict which spelled the end of both colonialism and fascism, the spawn of capitalism, and heralded the age of socialism and struggle of the world's nations for freedom, unity and progress.

21. Sateh al-Hosary: *Our Culture in the League of Arab States*, Beirut, 1962.

As a result of all this, the drive towards liberation and independence was intensified in the hearts and minds of all Arabs, side by side with the awakening of their national consciousness. The Arabs recognized that freedom was the road to unity, that unity was the guarantee of independence and that it was only the toiling masses who could wrench their freedom and achieve unity and socialism.

The magnitude of this progression towards political and social maturity in the basic concepts of Arab struggle was matched only by the enormity of the conspiracy hatched by the colonialist-zionist alliance to pervert the outcome of World War II from an outright triumph over fascism and colonialism, in the case of the Arab people, to a means of creating a new colonialist base to obstruct Arab awakening and invalidate all the positive gains of the previous phase. The whole world, not only the Arab homeland, was afflicted with the sickness of the neo-fascism begot by the colonialist-zionist alliance and planted in the soil of Palestine.

During the last world war, all the wealth and natural resources of the Arab homeland as a whole were put at the disposal of the forces which fought against fascism. Ours is the only nation in whose bosom the Jews lived in peace and tranquility over the centuries. Regardless of all this, the colonialist-zionist conspiracy was hatched against the Arabs as soon as the elements of awakening, liberation, progress and renaissance were seen to be at work. The colonialist-zionist alliance could not bear the thought that the Arab nation could at long last come into its own and contribute to the welfare of humanity and the making

of real peace. Hence, the war years were the ultimate phase of the unholy alliance which was initiated by the Balfour declaration and which achieved its goal by driving the wedge of the zionist state in the living body of the Arab nation.

The increasing importance of the Arab world as a huge reservoir of energy, which was demonstrated during the war years, intensified the determination and haste of the conspirators to carry out their scheme.

They were also spurred on to greater effort by their fear that their common interests in the area faced a grave threat in the greatly heightened tempo of Arab awakening in the course of the war years.

Consequently, the post-war period turned out to be an uninterrupted epic of strife between Arab militancy and the new alliances of the Arab nation's enemies. This was a strife between forces which act within the logic of history and those iniquitous forces whose interests and ideological blindness impel them to act in the opposite direction. In short, it is a struggle between the toiling peoples, on the one hand, and the classes and regimes which have enslaved those peoples through the ages, on the other: a struggle between the forces of peace and the world's warmongers.

Chapter Three

The Arab World in the Post-War Years (1945-1975)

The pre-war Arab world was completely dominated by colonialism. The Arab liberation movement, during those years, was a rather spontaneous haphazard affair devoid of any specific ideological content or social awareness and lacking an organizational framework. Consequently, it was a near impossible task to raise the regional localist uprisings which kept flaring up here and there in the Arab homeland, from the quicksand of partition and fragmentation into which colonialism had sunk the Arab nation, to the sane and solid ground of Pan-Arabism. Equally difficult was the task of freeing those stirrings of liberation from the influence of their predominantly bourgeois leaderships and entrusting them to the popular masses and their militant leadership.

In the course of World War II, colonialism underwent a number of transformations whose effects became apparent after the war. The Arab liberation

movement, in its turn, underwent a number of significant developments in such vital areas as political thought, Arab solidarity and progression towards the concept of Arab unity. In the area of political thought, the movement was able to rid itself of the noxious influence of fascism and bring out the true progressive identity of Arab struggle. As for solidarity, there was a great deal of Arab sympathy and moral support for Iraq's 1941 struggle against British colonialism. Moreover, there was a positive tendency to link up the struggle for unity and liberation with the movement of the Arab masses. All this, of course, was the outcome of a growing progressive awareness of the role of governments and political leaderships in general.

However, it was in the course of that very period (i.e. the war years) that the most heinous conspiracy against the Arab nation was hatched in preparation for the zionist takeover of Palestine. Consequently, the overriding feature of the post-war period was the unceasing and violent struggle which broke out between the two expressions of the new political equation which developed in the Arab world.

The major world gain of the war, namely, the fall of fascism, interacted with the gains of Arab struggle against colonialism. The outcome of such interaction was a positive thrust which impelled the Arab liberation movement towards ideological and organizational crystallization, that is to say: in a truly revolutionary direction.

However, the other expression of the equation ran counter to this positive thrust. It constituted a seriously negative factor whose adverse effects were

not merely a threat to the gains of Arab struggle but a grave danger which imperiled the very existence of the the Arab nation. This devastatingly negative factor emerged from the confluence of imperialist and zionist interests in the creation of the zionist entity in Palestine and the attempt at restoring colonialist influence over the Arab area. One of the aspects of this counter-thrust of colonialism-zionism has been the unremitting effort to obstruct the natural drift of the Arabs towards unity and frustrate their struggle for freedom and socialism.

Failure to recognize this dialectic in its all-embracing Arab dimension and the fact that it embodied the sum-total of the basic contradictions of the Arab situation, has resulted in the barrenness of those political movements which kept emerging in the Arab world only to be swept away by the tide of time or deteriorate and lag behind the age.

A "new world" did emerge from the conflagration of World War II, thanks to the global enormity of the conflict and the fact that it ended with a terrible bang that served as very eloquent reminder of what a repeat of that horror in a third world war could do to the human race. This sobering awareness of the suicidal folly of yet another global conflict resulted in an earnest and soul-searching scrutiny of all the world's pre-war social, political and economic postulates and cultural values.

The tragedy of our age is that the brave new world we all dream of does not seem to be attainable except in a sort of travail or bitter conflict which confronts us all, from one day to the other, with the deadly peril of yet another war.

The Arab homeland is one of the major arenas of this conflict which has been going on non-stop during the three post-war decades. It is true that the Arab nation has been able, in the course of the past thirty years, to make considerable headway towards ridding itself of the remaining vestiges of colonialist and imperialist domination and unmasking the new incarnation of fascism which has usurped Palestine. However, this enemy now confronts the Arab world with the threat of conquest and aggression, imperils the Arab liberation movement and puts at risk the Arab renaissance.

The last thirty years have been difficult, full of suffering, sacrifice and failure. They have witnessed an unremitting uphill struggle between the Arab liberation movement and the imperialist-zionist-reactionary alliance. Sometimes there was success, at others setback and failure. The dialectics and intensity of the struggle in the course of those thirty years were a constant challenge to Arab thought. This was due to the fact that the intricacies of such dialectics were too far-fetched for many of the political movements of the Arab world. Some of those movements were content to copy and advocate the application of ready-made ideological formulas, while others tended to apply, rather mechanically, the formulas of dialectical analysis and fail, in the process, to discover for themselves the scientific historical/dialectical method capable of encompassing the totatily of the Arab cause and the sum-total of the Arab situation's basic contradictions. The trouble was that those movements failed to combine militancy with independent judgement of ideological issues.

Consequently, many fell in the error of separating the phenomenon of colonialism from its subsequent post-war manifestations or —on the Arab level at least— from the phenomenon of zionism. Some even failed to perceive the identity of interest which has always existed between the exploiter classes and reactionary regimes of the Arab world, on the one hand, and the imperialist-zionist alliance, on the other. They simply ignored or failed to take into account the omnipotent position occupied by the contradictions of Arab society's class structure among the factors affecting the national liberation conflict. This inability to creatively apply historical dialectics to the Arab situation as a whole had a marked effect on the outcome of the struggle itself and, at times, on the relationships between the various groups engaged in it, during the post-war period. Those groups indulged in internecine conflicts because they were led by the absence of the dialectical/historical logic from their methods of analysis to focus on the part and forget the whole. They failed to perceive the major and overriding contradiction of the Arab situation and allowed themselves to drift into the quagmire of its secondary contradictions. Imperialism, zionism and the domestic forces of reaction, ever alert to any weakness or folly on the part of their adversaries, lost no time in exploiting to the full this infighting, in their combined interest.

This affliction has not been cured by bitter experience and continues to sap many of the energies of the Arab liberation movement. In our view, it will continue to do so as long as the various detachments of the Arab liberation movement persist in focusing,

each from its own standpoint, on a single facet of the Arab situation. Some of those detachments focus on the struggle against colonialism alone, in the fond belief that liberation means freeing the homeland from the tentacles of colonialism and imperialism, tout court. Others tend to focus on the Palestinian cause and consider the zionist phenomenon to be the major contradiction in the Arab situation. Yet others tend to be more preoccupied with internal Arab contradictions, such as the partitioned condition of the Arab homeland, it backwardness and class exploitation which enable the domestic forces of reaction to play an effective role in aborting the gains of the Arab liberation movement.

In view of the extreme complexity of the Arab situation, it is self-evident that such apportionment of the factors involved must be avoided if one is to apprehend the situation as a whole. The Arab liberation movement is, at one and the same time, a movement of liberation from colonialism, of liberating Palestine, of uniting the Arab homeland and helping it to emerge from the quagmire of backwardness and of socialist struggle against the prevalent capitalist environment and patterns of production which perpetuate inequality in the development of the rich and poor nations. It is especially so because the situation is no longer a matter for theorizing, analysis, study, understanding and logic but of actuality and confrontation with forces and factors which have united and massed up on the battlefield of the continuous ever-escalating onslaught against the contemporary Arab renaissance.

It has to be universally understood that imperial-

ism, zionism and the forces of reaction have forged an alliance which schemes against the Arab homeland as a whole and that its scheming cannot be understood and encircled unless it is viewed and dealt with on that basis.

The thirty years which have elapsed since the end of World War II, with all their shattering events, have been no more than a round in the conflict between that unholy alliance and the Arab liberation movement. The alliance is now girding up, after this long and varied experience, for a further round in which it will try to rise to the challenge posed by the new turn that the conflict has now taken.

For our part of the world, at least, the imperialist-zionist-reactionary alliance is one of the major phenomena of the age. We have to analyze and understand it. We have to isolate and explain the factors which gather together such forces and, in many instances, weld them into a united front.

In our view, the three main factors at work are the following:

1. The common hostility of imperialism, zionism and the domestic forces of reaction towards the Arab liberation movement. This shared hostility has been intensified by the fact that the movement acquired a mass character, revolutionary leaderships and a concrete ideology. It has thus become a real thorn in the side of imperialism and an adversary that is difficult to encircle and contain. Moreover, it constitutes a direct threat to zionism and the domestic forces of reaction which are both swimming against the stream of the contemporary world's historical movement.

2. The common hostility of the three parties to this alliance towards socialism, the socialist world, especially the Soviety Union and all progressive tendencies in the Arab world.

3. The coveted resources of the Arab world of which oil is the prime example.

These interdependent factors interact upon one another and it is in the context of their interaction that we can understand the manner in which the zionist entity emerged and developed over the post-war and acquaint ourselves with the true identity of the forces which made possible the creation of that entity, continue to aid and abet its aggression and expansion and are now intent upon doing away with all its difficulties, legitimizing its existence and liquidating the Palestine cause as a whole for its sake.

We can also trace out the development of the imperialist phenomenon after World War II and discover for ourselves its remaining pockets in the Arab homeland.

Lastly, we can take cognizance of the subversive role which the domestic forces of reaction have played and continue to play towards the achievement of the common objectives which those forces share with imperialism and zionism.

The Palestinian Cause and Zionism

The major problem of the Arab world throughout the post-war phase has been the Palestinian cause. This focal position derives from two main considerations:

1. An "internal" consideration which has to do with the geographic position of Palestine in the heart of the Arab homeland. Palestine is the link between the east and west of the Arab world. Added to this, is Palestine's historical significance to the Arab nation, as the depository of the most sacred values and the theatre of numerous major events of Arab history. Nationally, Palestine was one of the major centres of militant interaction through which the concept of Arab unity and the thrust of Arab awakening came to maturity.

2. An "external" consideration which has to do with zionism itself and the fact that it has been able, because it possesses a concrete ideology, a close-knit organization, experience with and control over the economic systems of the capitalist countries and their information media, to play a crucial role in formulating and implementing the designs of imperialism in the post-war period.

That is why the zionist movement, to the Arab world, is much more sinister than just another colonialist-settler onslaught and much more devastating than the mere transplantation, from West to East, of a new fascist formula.

To the Arabs, zionism is nothing less than a historic challenge of destiny: a yardstick that reveals how they measure up to their past history and the age they now live in and an agent that brings out the gravity of Arab partition, backwardness and the numerous aspects of imperialist and class exploitation which shackle them. In short, zionism, to the Arabs, is a seraing probe that plumbs the depths of their

present-day potential as a nation and gauges their ability to survive.

It is in this context that we can grasp the most of what has been happening in the Arab homeland since 29 November 1947 (the day it was decided to partition Palestine).

This UN General Assembly partition resolution was reminiscent of the League of Nations' resolutions after World War I whereby the Arab East was apportioned among the colonial powers and put under their tutelage. The fact that the resolution was adopted with the connivance of all the major powers without exception meant that the Arabs could depend on no one but themselves in fighting to a finish their battle with this new enemy.

When the armies of seven Arab countries entered Palestine in 1948, they did so without any clearly-defined objective other than the vague notion of having to fight off the zionists. Those armies marched into battle under the influence of many internal and external contradictory factors. They lacked a unified strategic plan as well as anything that could be termed "administrative setup". On the home front, there was complete lack of mobilization of resources. Worse still, the Arab armies went to battle under the leadership of people who were no better than lackeys of the zionist-imperialist-reactionary alliance. It was no wonder that those "armies" were defeated by some sixty thousand zionists whom British colonialism had trained and equipped with the then most modern of weapons. The searing contradiction embodied by such a defeat brought home to the masses of the Arab people and their armies the tragic dimensions of the

Arab situation and the stark horror of the zionist-imperialist conspiracy which stared them in the face.

The trauma of defeat brought in its wake the first stirrings of Arab Revolution. This Revolution found its full expression in the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party which gave it its ideology, organization and most mature form of political struggle.

The militarist phenomenon, as represented by the Nasser regime, was also generated by the 1948 defeat. This phenomenon was behind the many sudden shifts, twists and turns of such regimes in the Arab political arena.

The defeat of June 5 1967 brought in its wake the emergence of the Palestinian Revolution. It also demonstrated conclusively the failure of the militarist phenomenon and its inability to face up to the needs of this crucial phase of Arab history.

All the above three phenomena share the characteristic of giving overriding priority to the struggle against zionism, thanks to their clear understanding of the linkup of zionist, imperialist and reactionary designs. They also share the conviction that Revolution is the only possible answer to the zionist-imperialist-reactionary alliance. Moreover, they have the common characteristic of being oriented towards the masses and of having a unionist outlook and progressive tendencies. However, certain differences, both in degree and in kind, do exist, at times, between the three phonemena, in the areas of national and class awareness, the extent of their liberation from bourgeois and petit-bourgeois outlooks and the nature of their relationships with the masses. These differences are the reason why relations between the three

phenomena have been subject, over the past phase, to sudden twists and turns, despite their common commitment to the struggle against the zionist-imperialist-reactionary alliance as an absolute priority. Those twists and turns have tended, at times, to give precedence to a number of secondary contradictions over the principal and overriding contradiction in the Arab situation.

The Arab and Palestinian Revolutions, being two mass movements advocating revolutionary change through mass struggle and armed conflict, have often clashed with the militarist phenomenon whose development bears the imprint of its own class structure, the plane of its awareness and the nature of the objective circumstances which brought it into being and enabled it to come into power. The militarist leaderships have often demonstrated their alienation from their mass basis (the rank and file) which is part of the broad toiling Arab masses (the peasants and workers) and have thus been destined to play a negative role that tended to obstruct the movement of those broad masses.

In the context of this alienation from the masses, the concern of the militarist leaderships with arms procurement and the strengthening of Arab armies, their interest in Arab unity and solidarity and their adoption of socialist measures were, more often than not, a means of strengthening their own hold on power and not a means of strengthening the hand of the masses in their battle with zionism.

In the light of this, we can discover for ourselves the reason why the Arab masses were kept at arm's length from the actual battle in the course of the four

wars which have been brought about by the zionists' repeated attempts at usurpation, expansion and treachery in the years 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973. We can also understand the reason why the capitulation deals involved in the so-called "peaceful solution" are being made behind the backs of the militant Arab masses.

In the arena of the Arab nation's confrontation with zionism after World War II, there are three main alignments:

1. The reactionary alignment:

The forces of reaction and their ruling regimes have always insisted that zionism is not the spawn of imperialism. They have seized upon the Soviet Union's stand on the issues of partition and zionist immigration as a means of confusing the main issue and hiding from view the many friendly stands of the Soviet Union towards the Arabs and against Israeli aggression. Obviously, this alignment is allied, directly, to imperialism and, indirectly, to zionism.

2. The militarist alignment:

The militarist regimes have always shown a pronounced penchant for imposing their tutelage over the masses. There may or may not be truth in their habitual claim of "speaking the language of the masses", but they have never let those masses play any active part in the struggle or have any real say in the decisions taken by the military on matters affecting their destinies.

3. The militant alignment:

The militant forces of the Arab world are the true representatives of the broad masses as organized in political parties, vanguards and revolutionary organiz-

ations that wage their struggle within the framework of a revolutionary ideology and with the assistance of a toiling class setup. The militant political outlook of this alignment focuses on liberation as the major Arab objective.

Past experience in the arena of Arab struggle in the course of the post-war years indicates that the relationship between these three alignments is rather fluid. It shows that in the course of the Arab liberation movement's development, the various detachments of that movement have been subjected, time and again, to campaigns of distortion and falsification which caused certain forces and detachments to withdraw from one alignment and join the other. This is especially noticeable in the current stage which witnesses the unfolding of the grand design aiming at the liquidation of the Palestinian cause.

The catastrophe of Palestine was fundamental to the significant growth of Arab national consciousness over the post-war years. That consciousness is no longer the preserve of the educated bourgeoisie and the feudal classes. It has spread to the masses of the people. Thanks to this expansion of national consciousness, Pan-Arabism has gained a strong impetus which it lacked in the past. Moreover, this resurgence of the national sentiment has embraced the Arab homeland in its entirety and won the battle against the regional localist tendency in every Arab country from the Atlantic to the Arabian Gulf. More important still, the thought content of this national progressive consciousness is steadily crystallizing into a

scientifically sound socialist revolutionary mould.

This has been instrumental in bringing to light the true indentity of every Arab ruling regime and exposing it to the masses.

The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party made a very significant contribution towards the achievement of such a plane of awareness. Thanks to the Party's activism, the masses have been made fully aware of the real meaning of unity. Hence, they are no longer content with the outward semblance of unity which has been contrived through the Arab League's brand of co-ordination in a still partitioned and fragmented Arab homeland. To the masses of the Arab people, unity can now mean only one thing: the real unity of the whole Arab nation wich will be forged into a unique national liberated socialist entity by the united struggle of the masses. Furthermore, the masses now realize that liberation, the liberation of Palestine, is the only sound approach to enduring unity and that any other cannot be that of the masses.

There is no solution to the zionist problem but the elimination of the foundations upon which it has risen and the motives which propel it and which are of a negative character, stemming one and all from historical complexes: fanaticism, hatred, delusions of grandeur and persecution and a never-abating lust for aggression. When it comes to suffering, the Arabs have suffered much worse than the worst that befell the Jews at the hands of the Nazis.

The main thrust of the zionist grand design, over the past phase, was focused on the fragmentation of the Arab homeland and pushing the partition initia-

ted by colonialism to its outer reaches. This continuation by zionism of the colonialist endeavour involved the fostering of regionalism and sectarianism. Confessional and regional strife was encouraged and fuelled. This, of course, served two purposes, as far as the zionists were concerned: it strengthened their hand in their attempt to justify their alien presence in the living body of the Arab homeland and perpetuated the military threat which faces the Arab nation and obstructs the factors of resurgence which came to maturity in the course of the preceding phases.

The zionist phenomenon, which dominated the post-war situation, has come to the realization, after thirty long years of strife, that its conflict with the Arab nation can have only one outcome: victory for the side that is in the right, for the Arab masses are moving nearer to the battlefield.

In the first decade of zionist occupation (1948-1958), the Arab people underwent a number of experiences which brought about several positive changes in their political life, namely, the beginning of the revolutionary tide, the collapse of the reactionary regimes in Syria, the 1952 Nasser revolution, the 1954 Algerian revolution, the nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956, the 1958 merger between Syria and Egypt and the 14 July 1958 revolution in Iraq. All these major developments were brought about through the unity of Arab struggle in response to the Palestinian catastrophe.

The second decade (1958-1968) was a period of bitter struggle against the zionist-imperialist-reactionary alliance which stepped up its conspiracies against

the Arab homeland. In fact, this was the phase that witnessed the crime of secession in 1961 and the defeat of June 5 1967. Despite its terrible setbacks, however, it was not without its positive aspects. Some of its happenings were beneficial enough from the standpoint of the Arab liberation movement. It witnessed the Yemeni revolution against the corrupt and reactionary monarchy (1962), the final triumph of the Algerian revolution (1961), the revolutions of February 8 and March 8 1963, which were the Arab nation's retort to the crime of secession, the outbreak of the Palestinian revolution, in 1965 and the 17 July 1968 Revolution in Iraq.

The third decade (1968-1978) which, in 1975, is nearing its end, indicates, in its turn, an Arab upturn which had its roots in the aftermath of the June 1967 defeat and which, in the 1973 October War, was yet another reaffirmation of the Arab nation's answer to the zionist challenge and the Arab regimes conspiring with zionism against its future. That retort to zionism and its allies which is now coming loud and clear from the Arab nation is that the only solution to the problem lies in the hands of the Arab masses because they and they alone have the right to their land and realize that their entry into the arena will undo all that has been achieved by the zionist-imperialist-reactionary alliance towards the usurpation of the Arab nation's inalienable rights in Palestine.

Next to the overriding issue of liberating Palestine and the struggle against zionism, the post-war Arab world's preoccupation was the issue of independence and the struggle against imperialism.

The end of World War II brought with it, beside

the defeat of fascism, the downfall of colonialism. Although Britain and France were among the victors, the price of victory proved to be too high. They both emerged from the war thoroughly exhausted, encumbered with a host of grave economic problems and confronted with several serious uprisings in their Asiatic and African colonies. The Third World national liberation movements had come of age, and the colonial powers, such as Britain, France, Holland and Belgium were no longer able to cope with the rising liberation tide, despite the assistance extended by the US. Hence, the colonial powers were progressively compelled to give up their colonies. The great historic process of liquidation of the old colonial empires of the European powers had been initiated and was gathering momentum. Many of the Asian and African nations regained their freedom and independence. The number of sovereign states which became members of the United Nations rose from fifty, in 1945, to 138, in 1975.

The Arab world occupied a most oustanding and very special place in all this, due to the organic relationship between colonialism and zionism. The unholy colonialist-zionist alliance continued to play an outstanding role in the tenacious attempts which were being made, up to 1956, to restore the undermined sway of colonialism over the Arab area. The tripartite (British-French-zionist) aggression against Egypt, in that year, dealt a decisive blow to colonialist influence in the Arab world.

From 1945, the year when the war ended, through 1956, Syria and Lebanon, which had regained their independence in 1943, were evacuated by the foreign

armies of occupation (1946-1947) and Libya and Jordan joined the UN in 1955. Thus the number of Arab members of the world organization rose to eight:

Country	*Date joined UN*
Egypt	24 October 1945
Syria	" " "
Lebanon	" " "
Saudi Arabia	" " "
Iraq	21 December 1945
Yemen	30 September 1947
Libya	14 December 1955
Jordan	" " "

Source: UN Bulletin - The Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1974

The membership of the UN, however, did not rid the member country of the unwelcome and continued presence of colonialism. This presence took many different forms: military bases, treaties, economic influence and/or cultural dominance.

Hence, only two of the above Arab countries, namely Syria and Lebanon, could have been said to be truly independent (that is to say, completely rid of military occupation as well as colonial influence and dominance).

The popular movement led by the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party in Syria was decisive in liquidating the military, political, economic and cultural vestiges of colonialism in that country. The same may be said of

the evacuation agreement, the breaking of the arms monopoly and the nationalization of the Suez Canal, in Egypt. Moreover, the independence of these two countries (Syria and Egypt), their disengagement from foreign pacts (The Defence of the Middle East and the Baghdad agreements) and their militancy against such military alliances made them a major hurdle in the face of colonialism's designs and a direct threat to its interests in the Arab world, especially that they exercised a strong magnetic pull on the Arab masses and extended strong support to the Algerian Revolution and other liberation movements in the area.

Hence, the failure of the tripartite aggression against Egypt, in 1956, heralded the end of the Baghdad Pact, the eruption of the 14 July 1958 revolution in Iraq, the Syrian-Egyptian merger of 1958 and the victory of the Algerian Revolution in 1961.

Imperialism did not lose any time in trying to patch up things after the 1956 fiasco, especially that the Soviet Union's stand during the tripartite aggression against Egypt and its stern warning to the aggressors had knocked yet another hole in the wall of colonialist influence which enclosed the Arab area. Not long after the fiasco of the 1956 aggression, the American President Eisenhower launched his "vaccum theory" which called for the filling of the so-called vacuum left behind by colonialism with an imperialist presence.

It was not as if the US was just discovering for itself the logic of allying itself with colonialism and zionism: its unabated greed for sources of energy

made such an alliance, in its case, an inescapable necessity.

The role played by the US in the United Nations, the pressures it brought to bear on the member countries in the World organization in order to obtain a majority resolution partitioning Palestine, the recognition by the US of the zionist state half an hour after it was proclaimed, the statement of the US President on 15 May 1948 in which he told the world that Israel had been foisted on the Middle East to stem the tide of "patriotic jingoism" or, failing that, to steer it away from the US oil interests in the area, the unprecedented American aid, economic, military and diplomatic support to that alien entity demonstrate, beyond any need for elaboration, the organic nature of this noisome imperialist-zionist alliance.

Imperialism followed in the footsteps of colonialism towards the realization that the "patriotic jingoism" of the Arabs, that is to say, the revolutionary concept of Pan-Arabism, constituted a grave threat to their interests. Pan-Arabism had emerged in the post-war period as a fundamental reality and an effective force which deeply affected Arab political life. Its tide was the motive power behind the militant Arab masses in their unremitting struggle against colonialist alliances, foreign monopolies and the remnants of the cultural and political influence of colonialism. Therefore, imperialism did its best to steer the newly-achieved indepedence of the Arab countries, whose outlook was regionalist enough, towards isolationism. It tried to institutionalize the segmentation of the Arab homeland, promoted the polarization of the Arab countries and the formation of axes with

the objective of isolating, encircling and containing each one of them separately from the others. A ruthless war of attrition was declared by imperialism on the unionist endeavour of the Arab nation. Many a hare-brained scheme was concocted by imperialism and set loose to lure the Arab countries into initiatives and projects which could only abort and frustrate the striving of the masses after Arabe unity.

While American imperialism was busy scheming against the Arab nation, the old colonial powers tried to pursue their activities in the Arab world on a business-as-usual basis. France tried to persist in its colonialist role in the Arab Maghrib[22]. Britain tried to do the same with regard to the Suez Canal. However, the Algerian revolution, in the Maghrib, and the fizzling out of the grand design embodied in the tripartite aggression of 1956 settled the matter in favour of the Arab liberation movement.

Thereafter, however, that movement had to face up to a new situation which was hastened by the major victory it scored in bringing about the 1958 merger between Syria and Egypt. The new situation was an American-zionist alliance which became the prime mover of the scheming against the Arab liberation movement. One consequence of this new alignment was that the mopping up of the remaining pockets of old colonialism in the Arab homeland became painfully slow as reflected by the following

22. Ahmad ben Bella refers in his memoirs to the massacre of 8 June 1945. The Arab people of Algeria took to the streets on that day to celebrate the defeat of the Axis countries and were ruthlessly massacred by the forces of French colonialism. Forty five thousand Algerians were murdered on that day.

table showing the dates on which the remainder of the Arab countries became members of the United Nations:

Country	*Date*
The Sudan	12 November 1956
Tunisia	" " "
Morocco	" " "
Somalia	10 September 1960
Muritania	27 October 1962
Algeria	28 October 1962
Kuwait	14 May 1963
Democratic Yemen	14 December 1967
Bahrain	21 September 1971
Qatar	" " "
Oman	7 October 1971
United Arab Emirates	9 December 1971

Thus the Arab homeland was compelled to put up with the affliction of colonialism for a long time after the Second World War. Colonialism held on in Aden up to 29 November 1967 and remained east of Suez up to December 1971.

There are still a number of colonial pockets and imperialist bases in a number of Arab countries. There are (at the time of writing) four American bases in Saudi Arabia. The US is also using part of the British naval facility in Bahrain as a station for its fleets per the agreement concluded on 23 December 1971. Britain has still two bases in Bahrain, at al-Mahriq and Hamla, an air-base in the Emirate of Sharga, five bases in Masqat and the neighbouring

areas (Beit al-Flayih, al-Athba, Haggar, al-Boreimi and Massira) and three bases in Oman (Nazwi, al-Djabal al-Akhdar, called Milan as well and al-Zahra).

Thus the Arab liberation movement still faces, side by side with the zionist presence, the old pockets of old colonialism together with the new schemes of imperialism.

The Reactionary Phenomenon and the Oil Question

Zionism and imperialism have found in the reactionary forces of the Arab world their natural ally. These is no doubt that the zionist-imperialist-reactionary alliance constitutes the most disturbing and distinctive aspect of the Arab nation's contemporary experience. Because of it, the Arab liberation movement has been forced to fight its battles on three fronts which are linked together with the common denominator of oil.

In the past, colonialism had the full support of feudalism, its staunchest ally in the Arab countries. It also had the local entrepreneur, whose interests have always been linked with those of world capital. On top of all that, colonialism had its monopolies to dominate and plunder the sources of energy wherever they existed in the Arab countries.

With the advent of American imperialism, however, there was a shift of emphasis. It went directly to the heart of the matter and focused on the question of energy. In its book, there was no separating the economic from the political, and all the constituents

of the reactionary setup were lumped together and taken firmly in hand: its politics, economics, armed forces, cultural institutions and even the modes of its development were totally monopolized by imperialism. Moreover, imperialism's central intelligence agency was entrusted with the task of safeguarding the security and continued enforced stability of the reactionary regimes. In this way, those regimes have been integrated into the imperialist system itself and invested with the function of outposts on its outer periphery that will ever be linked by the umbilical cord of their subservience to the capitalist monopolistic placenta of imperialism.

The history of the relationship of Arab oil with colonialism and imperialism is rather long and depressing. Those who have studied the history of the Arab area found that it revolved around the central issue of Oil. Similarly, those who have studied the history of the zionist phenomenon must have become aware of the deep involvement of zionist capital in the oil monopolies and its tremendous impact on the political circles which stop at nothing in their support of zionism's designs.

Up to the end of World War II, only Iraq, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Egypt were oil producers. In 1945, the oil production of the Arab area rose to 200.000 b/d, from 115.000 b/d, in 1938. However, the swift expansion of Arab oil production in the post-war years raised Arab oil's share of the world's production rather dramatically[23]:

23. World Energy Supplies, 1974 —Statistical Review of World Oil Industry, 1965— Twentieth Century Oil Statistics, 1966.

Year	*% of world's production*
1945	2.8
1950	10.9
1955	19.10
1960	21.40
1965	27.60
1970	33.30
1973	34.50

Prospecting has revealed huge reserves of oil in the Arab homeland, especially in the Arabian Gulf area. This impelled the oil monopolies to step up the development of the Arab oilfields. At the time of writing, the proven reserves are estimated at 55.9% of the total world reserve of this precious commodity.

Since 1948, the US has been importing oil at an increasing pace from the Middle east, as its domestic oil production tended to exceed, progressively, the yearly additions to its reserves.

In the latter half of the fifties, American and European oil monopolies penetrated the production areas of the Arab world and most of them were highly successful in prospecting for Arab oil. The number of oil producing Arab countries rose from 4 to 8, in the course of that period. In the mid sixties, their number rose to 10 and, in 1973, to 14, as shown in the following table[24]:

24. Ibid.

Year	*Number of Countries*	*Details*
1938	2	Iraq and Egypt
1945	4	Added to the above: Bahrain and Saudi Arabia
1950	6	added to the above: Kuwait and Qatar
1955	8	added to the above: Algeria and the Neutral Zone
1965	10	added to the above: Abu Dhabi and Libya
1970	13	added to the above: Oman, Syria and Tunisia
1973	14	added to the above: Dubai

The increasing importance of oil in relation to energy consumption, world trade and the welfare and progress of most countries has made energy a major factor in the economic and political calculations of the imperialist powers and monopolistic multinationals. It is needlees to point out the fact that the economic activity of the whole world depends upon energy or that, strategically, oil, as a major source of energy, has a far-reaching effect on the balance of military and political power.

When discoveries and prospecting indicated that the Arab area is the major reservoir capable of supplying the world, over a long period of time, with crude oil, the Arab homeland moved up several more notches in the scale of priorities of imperialist scheming. None of the affairs of the Arab area now fails to arouse a great deal of interest on the part of

imperialist circles. As a matter of fact, their researchers and the many universities they have planted in the Arab world scrutinize every aspect and/or change in the patterns of Arab life. A network of intelligence services and agents keeps those powers informed of every single happening of any significance in the Arab homeland.

As a result of all this, the imperialist-reactionary alliance in the Arab world has acquired a status of top priority on the imperialist agenda. It complements the protective belt embodied in the imperialist-zionist alliance. As stated by the US President a few minutes after the zionist state was foisted on the Arab world, the specific function of that state is the protection of imperialism's oil interests. The function of the Arab forces of reaction, in this context, is to foil any attempt which may constitute a threat to those interests and which may be made in this or that Arab oil producing country and, on the whole, stand in the face of any libertarian Arab oil policy.

As far as imperialism is concerned, the Arab world is not only a source of crude oil, but a real gold mine. It was the source of untold profits which poured in the coffers of the oil companies when they were allowed to exploit the area. The oil producing countries, in general, and the Arab oil countries, in particular, have sustained immeasurable losses through the arbitrary fixing of prices and the imposition of unfair conditions by the oil monopolies. Nevertheless, Arab reaction has been most dedicated in its defence of the interests of those monopolies. The forces of reaction would have been wiser if they had shown the minimun of goodwill towards the real

and legitimate owners of that precious resource: the masses of the Arab people, whose interests those forces should have been defending. In effect, the forces of reaction have conspired to deprive the masses of the Arab people of their major and most valuable asset. The loss sustained by the Arab countries through the underpricing of their oil, over the period from 1950 through 1973, is estimated at $58.8 billion. On top of all that, the plundering of the Arab nation by the oil monopolies was made complete through the transfer abroad of the major part of the companies' profits, which accrued from the exploitation of the Arab poeple's oil wealth, for investment in the economies of other countries. The downstream operations arising from the ruthless plundering of the Arab nation's oil were also monopolized by the consumer countries.

Colonialism's oil policies aimed at keeping the economies of the Arab oil countries in a state of total dependence on their oil revenues. The colonial powers gave a very high priority to preventing the Arab nation from using its oil wealth in fuelling the economic development it so desperately needed and sparking off its economic revival which was long overdue.

While the Arab regimes involved in the Arab liberation struggle did their best to break that vicious circle of colonialist exploitation, impoverishment and backwardness, the Arab reactionary regimes, ever the staunch allies of imperialism, spared no effort in aiding and abetting their ally in achieving its objectives. Those regimes have been quite successful in perpetuating the state of backwardness in their coun-

tries, which are the richest in oil, and preventing that valuable resource from fuelling economic regeneration in all the other sectors of their countries' economies.

At the time of writing, the American oil companies own about 60% of the Arab homeland's oil resources. On the basis of 1971 figures, this percentage represents 325 million tonnes. The contribution of America's oil companies involved in the Middle East oil industry to the US balance of payments is about $2000 million per annum.

In the light of the foregoing we can see the reason why the US marines landed in Lebanon in the wake of the 14 July 1958 revolution in Iraq, why Britain felt constrained to land 7000 of its troops in Kuwait when Abdul-Karim Qassem threatened to occupy that country, in 1961, and why a US President saw fit to threaten the Arabs with outright occupation of their oilfields in the wake of the October 1973 War.

Chapter Four

The Main Characteristics of the Post-War Arab World

I. The Arab Liberation Movement in the Ascendant

The Arab liberation movement came of age through its interaction with the harsh realities of the post-war world and multilateral struggle with imperialism, zionism and the domestic forces of reaction. This ever-increasing momentum of the movement towards Arab unity, the mass struggle against imperialism and militancy for socialism were the predominant features of the whole phase. The concomitance of liberation struggle and the struggle for unity and socialism reflected the increased maturity of the scientific revolutionary concept of Pan-Arabism. On the other hand, it demonstrated the increased involvement of the Arab masses in the Pan-Arab struggle and the added specific gravity this involvement imparted to the Arab nation's striving for unity.

The struggle for liberation and independence was linked, in varying degrees, with the striving for unity in all the Arab countries. The Arab nation's struggle for socialism supported and strengthened its struggle for liberation. The awareness of the masses led them to the realization that so long as pockets of colonialism's economic and/or cultural influence remained in the Arab homeland, colonialism was going to be able to vitiate political independence and drain it of any serious progressive or libertarian content. It was also obvious that as long as the Arab countries remained in the orbit of capitalism, captive to its multinationals and world monopolies, colonialism was going to be able to drain any form of independence those countries may have achieved of any real value. Thanks to this awareness, the masses of the Arab people were never taken in by the outward show of the regional localist brand of independence which a number of Arab countries were allowed to achieve, and wherever those masses waged their liberation struggle in the Arab homeland, the thrust of that struggle was three pronged: it was libertarian, unitarian and socialist.

The liberation struggle of the Arab nation was waged against all its afflictions. It was a struggle against colonialism, the reactionary regimes, the economic, social and cultural backwardness of the Arab countries and the partition of the Arab homeland. There was not a single uprising that took place in any part of the Arab world which did not elicit the support of the Arab masses in other Arab countries. As a matter of fact, all the major developments which took place in the Arab countries over the post-war

years were closely related to this mass movement which encompassed the Arab homeland from east to west. The major events, such as the Algerian revolution (1954), the nationalization of the Suez Canal (1956), the Syrian-Egyptian merger (1958), the 14 July 1958 revolution in Iraq. the socialist decrees in Egypt (1961), the Yemen revolution (1962), the revolt of Syria and Iraq against the secession (1963), the eruption of the Palestinian Revolution (1965), the 17 July 1968 Revolution in Iraq, the nationalization of oil in Iraq (1972) and the October 1973 War were all positive embodiments of this unity of Arab struggle.

II. Ideological Development

The second distinctive characteristic of the phase was the development which took place in the area of ideological thought in the Arab world, namely, the very significant stride taken by Arab revolutionary thinking towards the formulation of mature and truly revolutionary guidelines for the Arab liberation movement.

It was the adoption of the scientific historical/dialectical method which led Arab political thought to view the Arab situation through the fundamental belief that Arab unity is the effective answer to the fragmentation and partition imposed on the Arab homeland during the colonial era.

This ideological development was also characterized by awareness of the web of fundamental contradictions which criss-cross the Arab situation, namely, colonialism, partition, backwardness and class con-

tradictions. Furthermore, this process of intellectual maturity involved the leaving behind of rigid adherence to abstract theoretical dogma and copying of ready-made analyses which take no account of the vast differences between an advanced industrial society and a society where the bedouin sector is more or less predominant. In short, this newly-achieved maturity was mainly reflected in a sort of stubborn reluctance on the part of the mind to become overwhelmed by the fallacies of formal systems of thought, philosophical totalitarian tenets or purely empirical tendencies.

Revolutionary Arab ideology was also able to shed and leave behind the inertia of the traditionalist outlook which keeps the eyes of a nation turned backwards and fixed on its past. At the same time, it was able to avoid the pitfall of improvisation which goes hand in hand with a superficially progressive outlook that severs all the nation's links with its past in favour of a partial contemporary view.

Moreover, the adoption of the scientific historical/dialectical method enabled the Arab liberation movement to discover for itself the historical context of the Third World and the experiences of the toiling nations. This dialectical method was behind the major intellectual discoveries of the Arab liberation movement, especially with regard to the significance of the nationalist phenomenon in this day and age, the new progressive libertarian identity of the nationalist outlook in the Third World, the positive role played by religion and spiritual values in the life and struggle of the Arab masses and the concept of

international relations based on the militant association of free socialist nations, etc.

The scientific historical/dialectical method is the outcome of an overall development which took place in revolutionary thought on a world level. The Arab liberation movement made a significant contribution to that development, not least through its balanced and well thought out application of this method to the Arab situation.

The contemporary Arab ideology emerged from the maelstrom of conflict and was not the outcome of academic thinking or abstract theoretical analysis. It will always represent the living outcome of the unity of thought and action, theory and practice, ideology, strategy and tactics. The interaction of Arab struggle with the changes wrought by World War II has been most profound. The effects of that interaction were reflected in an accelerated tempo of development in every field of life and confluence of the currents of the Arab liberation movement with the general traits of the progressive and socialist movements in the post-war world.

The process of maturity which took place in the course of that period, on the ideological level, has equipped the Arab liberation movement with effective defences against the residual elements of fascist thought, the deviations of reactionary thinking and the restricted outlook of regionalism. It has also provided socialist thought with an added momentum which derived from the linking of socialist struggle with its living framework: the struggle against colonialism and partition. "The contemporary Arab ideology embodied in the theory of unity, freedom and

socialism has thus become the theoretical guidebook of revolutionary action in the Arab homeland, thanks to its ability to set forth the Arab cause in 'a comprehensive intellectual formula' and base the Arab liberation movement on solid foundations"[25].

Nationalism, as defined by the founder of the Ba'th, Mr. Michel Aflaq, is "the mature level attained by human communities as a result of the interaction, over many centuries, between their individual members and their natural and historical circumstances and the common material and spiritual bonds deriving from such interaction, foremost among which is the bond of culture"[26].

The age we live in is "the age of the masses":

"Now it is the turn of the masses. The real masses are the peoples of Asia and Africa who have undergone the most profound human experience of external and internal enslavement. The revolution of the eastern peoples is mainly characterized by a predominant libertarian humanistic outlook, because it is a revolution against colonialism. Whereas injustice, in the West, is the lot of certain classes, the East is made up of whole nations that are victims of injustice"[27].

We have entered the age of "humanistic nationalism":

"It is a mistake to regard nationalism and humanism as two consecutive stages in a given chronologi-

25. Michel Aflaq: *For the Ba'th,* 7th printing, p. 186.

26. Michel Aflaq: *The Battle of the One Destiny,* 5th edition, p. 145.

27. Michel Aflaq: *Ibid,* p. 49.

cal sequence. One should not hold that the age of nationalism is on the way out and that it is making way for an age of humanism. Rather, it would be valid to hold that we have actually embarked upon an age of humanistic nationalism, that is to say, an age wherein nationalism sheds its ancient bigotries, self-centrism and other negative attributes and acquires a humanistic outlook"[28].

Pan-Arabism is an anti-colonialist militant movement and a principal constituent of today's world:

"The struggle of the world's people, especially that of the Arab nation, the largest force in the Middle East, constitutes a profoundly human experience insofar as those peoples were dominated by colonialism for such a long time.

The gains deriving from that experience are an essential element in the makeup of today's world, having stemmed from profound suffering the like of which has not been the lot of any other people in this age"[29].

Bigoted nationalism is the spawn of colonialism:

"We have defined the meaning of nationalism, as far as Pan-Arabism is concerned. Its two basic tenets are freedom and socialism. Our Arabist concept differs from all traditional nationalist outlooks. It is not an intractable ossified notion and, above all, is not tainted with the arrogance of belief in racial exclusivity. It could not be farther, say, from the Nazi concept of nationalism. To us, Arabism is essentially

28. Michel Aflaq: *For the Ba'th,* op. cit., p. 179 & p. 183.

29. Michel Aflaq: *The Battle of the One Destiny,* op. cit. pp. 188-189.

human. Our belief in Pan-Arabism involves, as a basic constituent, the realization of how sacred the sentiment of their national belongingness is to all other peoples. Bigoted nationalism was spawned in our area by colonialism. Its hideous twin, confessionalism, was fostered by colonialism and recruited in the service of its subversive objectives"[30].

The interests of the world's peoples cannot be at loggerheads:

"Peoples' interests do not clash with each other. The interest of the Arab people in vanquishing French colonialism in Algeria and Morocco was congrous with the French people's interest in ridding themselves of oppression. The struggle of the Arab people is not theirs alone, it is also the struggle of the whole world, for its ultimate outcome can only be twofold: the liberation of the Arabs and a positive contribution towards the liberation of the world's peoples"[31].

The traits of those nationalist movements which are given to aggression under the capitalist system cannot be those of the nationalist movements of the oppressed nations struggling for their liberation, like the Arab nation:

"European nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been characterized by reaction, bigotry and the subjugation of every value to bourgeois and capitalist interests. There is no way that such characteristics could be attributed to the nationalism of a people like ours who have suffered

30. Michel Aflaq: *For the Ba'th,* op. cit., p. 172 and p. 176.
31. Michel Aflaq: *Ibid,* p. 342.

injustice and are constantly faced with the threat of aggression. Ours is a type of nationalism that involves nothing more sinister than an attempt to preserve the fundamentals of the Arab identity and love for all peoples. Our struggle for independence has always been humanly motivated. Hence, there is no justification for any comparison between the nationalist theory in the West and the nationalist movements of the downtrodden peoples of Asia and Africa to which Pan-Arabism belongs"[32].

Therefore, revolutionary Arab ideology views the Arab cause as a process of unification of libertarian struggle with the struggle for unity and socialism on the part of the Arab nation:

"The Arab cause should be viewed as an undivided whole and should be handled on that basis. Those who focus on nothing but Arab unity are in effect fragmenting the Arab cause. We hold that it is not possible to separate unity from socialism. It is not true that the achievement of unity will entail the achievement of socialism as a necessary consequence. There is no guarantee at all that this will happen. History teaches us that national unity was achieved time and again on a reactionary, feudalistic and bigoted basis, that is to say on a basis of exploitation, contempt for the individual as citizen and a fear of freedom"[33].

The foregoing quotations from the writings of the founder of Ba'thism reflect the stage of development

32. Michel Aflaq: *Ibid,* pp. 185-186.

33. Michel Aflaq: *The Battle of the One Destiny,* op. cit., p. 33.

attained by the Arab liberation movement on the ideological level. This development reached its zenith in a corresponding advance in the area of party life.

III. The Development of Political Parties

The emergence of an Arab revolutionary ideology based on a scientific dialectical/historical method taking its point of departure from an in-depth analysis of the makeup and contradictions of Arab reality was equalled in importance only by the perfecting of a revolutionary apparatus capable of embodying such an ideology and a party organization capable of embracing the whole of the Arab homeland. National organization on the level of the Arab world had made a fundamental achievement by coupling the concept with the means of its implementation within the framework of the contemporary Arab awakening. Moreover, the national framework and its toiling revolutionary setup had endowed the theory of unity, freedom and socialism with a real living body which enabled it to move against the partition of the Arab homeland and militate for ridding it of its backwardness, exploitation and the colonialist domination which stifled it. The importance of this development in the party politics of the Arab world in the post-war period may become more pronounced through a detailed examination of its various aspects:

A. The Forties

The end of the forties witnessed the emergence of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party on 7 April 1947, as the culmination of a long process of ideological and militant preparation that lasted from 1940 through 1947. The Syrian region and, specifically, the city of Damascus were the cradle wherein Ba'thism had its beginnings. The emergence of Ba'thism marked the end of an era and the beginning of another. Its emergence virtually put an end to the ideological strife which raged unabated between several currents of political thought that had long opposed and contradicted each other, namely, the strife between:

— the purely nationalistic and internationalistic tendencies;

— the non-socialist nationalistic and the non-nationalist socialistic tendencies;

— the progressive and the reactionary;

— the nationalist and the regionalist;

— the revolutionary and the reformist; and

— the fascist and the social-democratic.

It was the Ba'th that put paid to the turmoil and unending strife between these warring outlooks. This the Ba'th achieved because it was able, for the first time in the history of contemporary Arab thought, to evolve a concept of nationalism that transcended all the shortcomings, aspects of backwardness and bigotries which handicapped the petit-bourgeois versions of nationalism, isolated the nationalist outlook from socialism, emptied it of its class content, alienated nationalist thought from the progressive revolutionary

view of humanity and prevented it from assimilating the distinctive characteristics of the regional experience of those Arab countries whose gains constituted a great gain for the Arab nation as a whole.

Moreover, the Ba'th endowed socialism with a new dimension, as far as the Arab nation was concerned, by linking it with the fundamental prerequisite of its realization and success in the Arab homeland, namely, the concept of Arab unity. The Ba'th also did this through its insistence that the worldwide class struggle between imperialism and the colonized toiling peoples must be taken into consideration side by side with class struggle in the Arab homeland on the regional and Pan-Arab levels. Ba'thist thought also rejected the notion of a unique model of socialism, at a time when Stalinism was adamant in its refusal to concede that there could exist more than one approach to socialism.

Thus the Ba'th put and end to the ideological quandary of the Arab nation and initiated a new phase of nationalist organization that embraces all the sons of the Arab homeland despite the regionalist fragmentation imposed by colonialism on the Arab people. From the very outset, the Ba'th has been an Arab party, in the true scientific and revolutionary sense of the word. Hence, the founding of the Ba'th meant the initiation of a new phase of Arab militancy. This confronted the political parties of that phase with the option of developing or passing out, and that was exactly what happened in the course of the decades that followed, from the fifties through the seventies.

Development, in the case of certain parties, was

rather slow and gradual, in the case of others it was theatrical, abrupt and rather acrobatic.

There were parties which shifted their stand from fascist nationalism to the terrain of the then new marxist left. Other parties changed horses in mid course: from international socialism to regionalist nationalism. Others ended by rejecting the concept of Arab unity altogether, because their starting point was the rejection of socialism. Yet others rejected socialism in the end because they had started by rejecting Arab unity. All this took place because those parties were completely blind to the dialectical relationship between nationalist struggle against fragmentation, class struggle against the reactionary classes and libertarian struggle against imperialism. Thus it was never clear to them that no Arab country could ever achieve socialism so long as the Arab homeland remained fragmented and partitioned. Unity is a pre-requisite of socialism. At the same time, there will be no unity for the Arab homeland under the forces of reaction and in isolation from socialism. This is the fundamental truth brought to light by the scientific dialectical/historical logic of contemporary Arab ideology.

In Iraq[34], the struggle took place between:

The non-socialist nationalistic tendency, whose political line was embodied in the stand of Yassin al-Hashemy and Rashid Ali al-Kailani (the Revolution of 1941) and whose military posture was represented by Slah al-Din Sabbagh and his group and

34. Taleb Mushtaq: *Record of my Days, Iraq: 1900-1958,* Dar al-Taliaa Beirut, 1968.

later extended to Rifaat al-Hajj Sirry and his colleagues whom Abdul-Karim Qassem executed after the 14 July 1958 Revolution, and:

The regional-localist socialist tendency, whose political line was embodied in Hekmat Salman, Jaafar Abul-Temman and Kamel al-Jaderchi. This political stand was to be inherited, at a much later date, by the Iraqi Communist Party, al-Ettehad al-Watani (The National Union) Party and al-Sha'b (The People's) Party. The tendency's military posture was represented by Bakr Sedqi and his companions and inherited by Abdul-Karim Qassem and his group.

The conflict between these two tendencies went on unabated until Ba'thism emerged with its Pan-Arab socialist creed which linked Arab unity with socialist revolution in a class-struggle context based on the struggle of the toiling masses of the Arab homeland.

The nationalist tendency in Iraq underwent a development that was embodied, in the forties, in the emergence of al-Esteqlal (The Independence) Party, in 1946. The "Esteqlal" developed from a small group originally affiliated to al-Muthanna Club which was known in the thirties for its nationalist-religious tendency. That nationalist group was soon to dominate the Club and act as one of the major forces which supported the Rashid Ali al-Kailani movement of 1941. After the failure of Kailani's movement, the Muthanna nationalists began their preparations for the establishment of The Independence Party. The party's leadership were middle class intellectuals, its policy anti-colonialist and anti-monarchist. On top of

all that, it called for Arab unity, though in a characteristically ambiguous bourgeois fashion.

In the course of that decade, al-Hizb al-Watani al-Dimoqrati (The Democratic National Party) also emerged (1946). The party represented a current of national democracy which was more or less in sympathy with socialist thought: it aimed at freedom and independence without neglecting the social progressive aspects of the struggle inyolved in such an endeavour. The party was accessible, during the forties, to all the patriotic progressive currents and provided a good solid front behind which most political parties were able to operate during that period of harsh monarchist repression.

The decade of the forties in Iraq witnessed a certain amount of co-operation and co-ordination between the Democratic National, the People's and the National Union parties. On 26 August 1946, a three-party conference was held. The December 1948 uprising in Iraq[35], which was led by all the national legal and underground (illegal) political parties, witnessed the spontaneous emergence of a complete national coalition. In mid-1949, the Democratic National and Independence parties entered into alliance with the other national blocs which were in opposition to the reactionary monarchist regime.

The People's Party, at that time, was marxist-oriented. Its membership was accessible to commu-

35. On 2 April 1946, five political parties were proclaimed legal in Iraq: The Democratic National, The Independence, The Liberal, The People's and The National Union Parties. The National Liberation (communist) Party, was banned.

nists, socialists, liberals and people of any other anti-colonialist persuasion. The National Union Party, at the same time, was calling for a merger that was meant to fuse all Iraq's progressive parties into a single party organization. The National Union Party's outlook was similar, in many respects, to that of the Democratic National Party which embraced a majority of marxist intellectuals and a number of liberals.

The Iraqi Communist Party suffered, in 1948, after the uprising, a severe blow which impeded its activity and disrupted its organization. This, of course, had a damaging effect on the party as a whole, led to its isolation and caused many splits in its ranks. In April 1949, a number of its members launched a splinter group under the name of "The Starists" (in reference to the Red Star). Towards the end of the same year, another splinter group, this time called "The Unionists", emerged in Suleimaniya, which called for scrapping the party and setting up a new one. A third splinter, "The Group of Marxist Consciousness" held that there was no need for a communist party and that, instead, a conscious marxist generation should be educated.

It should be noted that the splits suffered by the Arab communist parties, in particular, and the crises of the regional and national Arab parties, in general, took place in the wake of the Palestine catastrophe, the stand of the communist parties on the partition issue and their subsequent isolation from Arab public opinion. Those splits and crises also took place after the emergence of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party with its revolutionary approach to the nationalist issue. The Ba'th's unitarian, socialist and libertarian ap-

proach exercised a swift and profound pull on the Arab masses because it embodied the profound expression of their objective needs.

The same decade witnessed a significant development in Egypt in relation to al-Wafd (The Delegation) Party which was the country's major political party. It was the Wafd which spearheaded the national movement throughout the period from the Second World War up to the 1952 revolution. After the war, the Wafd, which had been calling for nothing more radical than the evacuation of Egypt by the British and the unification of "the Nile Valley" (i.e. Egypt and the Sudan), embarked on a new phase. In 1947, there emerged in its ranks (especially among the younger members) a progressive current which called itself the "Wafdist Vanguard". The young progressives involved in this vanguard held that the party's declared objectives of national democratic revolution should embrace a more pronounced social content and a commitment to strive for social justice.

There also emerged in the ranks of the Wafd a movement which called itself "The Popular Liberation Vanguard". This was, in effect, a socialist group which worked hand in hand with the social democratic elements of the Wafdist Vanguard. The latter group enjoyed a great deal of popularity among the students and workers.

Another significant change in the Egyptian political scene was the unexpected transformation of the "Misr al-Fatat" (Young Egypt) fascist oriented group into a socialist party and its issuance of a socialist manifesto, in 1948.

The Egyptian marxist movement proper under-

went a process of amalgamation. The "Sharara" (Spark) group, an intelligentsia organization entered into a political merger with "The Egyptian Movement for National Liberation", thus forming "The Democratic Movement for National Liberation" (DMNL). However, the merger was not successful. Before the year was over it had split and was plunged into a heated factional strife that polarized other marxist groups which were not party to the collapsed merger, such as al-Fajr al-Jadeed (The New Dawn), and al-Usba al-Marxiya (The Marxist League). The strife was soon to widen in scope, in the aftermath of the Palestine 1948 War. Foremost among the bones of contention were such issues as each party's stand on the partition resolution and the drive to Egyptianize the democratic movement.

The same fate overtook the "Workers' Revolutionary Organization", which was split into two groups: al-Najm al-Ahmar (The Red Star) and the Egyptian Communist Party.

In Lebanon, the same decade witnessed the emergence of al-Nid'a al-Qawmi' (The National Call) Party. This was the organization of the national patriotic current of Lebanese politics in the post-independence era. There also emerged The Progressive Socialist Party (1949), which promoted co-operativist-socialist thought in a Lebanese context that called for solidarity with the other Arab countries. The vanguards of The Arab Nationalists' Movement also emerged after the Palestine catastrophe, in 1948. The movement called for "unity, freedom and vengeance" and organized its para-military arm, "Kata'eb al-Fida'a al-Arabi" (Battalions of Arab Redemption), for

the express purpose of assassinating those public figures who were held responsible for the catastrophe. The movement had a Pan-Arab organization.

In the Sudan, the unionist parties (unity with Egypt) which had emanated from the Graduates' Congress movement, namely, al-Ettehadioun (The Unionists), al-Asheqa'a (The Brethren) and al-Ahrar al-Ettehadioun (The Liberal Unionists), entered into coalition, in 1945, and agreed among themselves on a political charter with the major objective of achieving unity with Egypt. In 1946, there emerged a new party which called itself "Hizb Wehdat Wadi'l Nil" (The Party of The Nile Valley Unity). This was the most radical of the Sudanese unionist parties in militating for unity with Egypt.

The Sudanese communist party, which also emerged in 1946, and was known by the name of "The Sudanese Democratic Movement for National Liberation" (SDMNL), was forced to remain underground for the duration of that decade.

In Algeria, The People's Party carried on its struggle against French colonialism and the movement of assimilation. It raised such slogans as: "Arabic is Our Language", "Land for the Peasants", etc., and militated for respect for Islam and a parliamentary life for Algeria. The party's leader, Massali al-Hajj, was arrested in 1941, but the party carried on the struggle and was successful in setting up an Algerian front under the name of "Asdiqa'a al-Bayan al-Jaza'eri" (Friends of the Algerian Proclamation). However, a split occurred between the People's and Proclamation parties, after the War. The People's Party developed into "Entissar al-Hurri-

yat al-Dimoqratiya" (Triumph of Democratic Freedoms) Party and focused on the struggle for independence.

In Syria, the National Bloc had split, after independence, into two parties: the ruling al-Watani (National) Party, and the opposition al-Sha'b (People's) Party. Both parties represented the feudal and bourgeois classes. However, the People's Party tended to expand and involve in its activities other section of the middle class. Whereas the National Party focused on Syrian regionalism, the People's Party called for Arab unity. Both parties shared a pronounced hostility towards socialism.

In the course of that period, the Syrian Communist Party made capital of the Soviet Union's alliance with Western powers during the War in expanding its activities in Syria without incurring any serious harassment at the hands of the French authorities of occupation. However, the party tended to isolate itself from the anti-colonialist independence movement. This isolation was made more acute through the party's acquiescence in the Palestine partition resolution. A very sharp contradiction emerged, during that phase, between the communists, on the one hand and the Arab masses and the Arab nationalist parties, on the other.

B. The Fifties

This decade was characterized by the continued ascendancy of Ba'thism and its spread to other Arab countries (Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan and Yemen).

Among the other distinctive features of the decade were the emergence of Nasserism and the Arab Nationalists' Movement, the spread of socialist ideas, the formation by various parties of national fronts and the mergence of progressive wings in a number of bourgeois and petit-bourgeois parties.

In Egypt, Ba'thist thought made headway in the universities through the contact of Egyptian students with Arab students who came from countries where Ba'thism had already taken root. Moreover, the Ba'th was becoming increasingly well-known through the many distinctive political stands it took on various issues. The echoes of such stands reached Egypt from Syria, then from Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, where the Ba'th had become the leading party. After the mid-fifties and in the wake of its victory over military dictatorship (Adib al-Shishekli military regime; al-Shishekli's being the last of the military juntas whose coups and counter-coups had wracked Syria from 1949 through 1954), the Ba'th exercised a progressively integrated control over the Syrian region's political life. Its achievements in that decade were crowned with the Syria-Egypt merger of 1958. The Ba'th also played a significant and fundamental role during the decade in bringing about the realization of the principle of Arab struggle unity, supporting the Nasser and Algerian revolutions, overthrowing colonialist pacts, carrying out the 14 July 1958 revolution in Iraq and opposing the isolationist and reactionary tendencies which manifested themselves in the 1958 internal political explosion in Lebanon.

Nasser's revolution in Egypt was shaping up during that period. Its development crystallized the

nucleus of an intellectual and political current that was organically convergent with Ba'thism through the unity of struggle against colonialism and zionism with its unending aggression against the Arab nation. This current, which was later to be called Nasserism, started with a sort of emotive attraction to the charismatic personality of Nasser and his bold libertarian postures which, at one time, gave an added momentum to the Arab liberation movement and shifted its emphasis to a new plane of struggle on the national and international levels. Later, however, Nasserism was to become a sort of blind personality cult in the haze of which Nasser's postures were unthinkingly adopted at their face-value, defended and justified without scrutiny, criticism or discussion. Thus Nasserism which, at the outset, contained a certain element of Ba'thist thought, corrupted itself to such an extent that it became a demagogic movement based on the chanting of slogans about socialism, freedom and unity with no other purpose in view but luring the Arab masses into the dead-end of allegiance to the ruling regime in Egypt. None of the slogans chanted by Nasserism reflected an Arab ideology that could be said to express the struggle and interests the toiling classes in the forefront of which is the Arab working class. Hence, Nasserism could not claim any positive revolutionary content or attribute to itself the role of path-finder for the struggle of the Arab masses under the leadership of an Arab revolutionary vanguard with and all-embracing Pan-Arab organization and the overriding commitment of enabling the working class to lead Arab struggle. Thus the Arab revolutionary concept became, in the case of

Nasserism, a mere tool in the service of the regime interests whereas the regime should have put itself in the service of the concept.

The concept of socialism was not quite clear during that phase. Moreover, Nasserism's class outlook did not venture beyond the notion of class-alliance (the alliance of the people's working forces which Nasserism had borrowed from the Yugoslav experiment) and did not reflect any definite strategy. As a matter of fact, Nasserism took its point of departure, on the ideological plane, from a concept directly opposed to that of class struggle upon which socialist thought is built.

At the beginning of the fifties, the militancy of the Muslim Brotherhood reached an all-time high. The Brethren were not active in Egypt alone. Their presence was acutely felt in such countries as Syria, Jordan and the Sudan. However, they were soon to overreach themselves. They made an attempt on Nasser's life during a mass-rally, in Alexandria, and were promptly dealt a near mortal blow which crippled them not only in Egypt but in all those other countries where they had been ferociously spearheading the reactionary thrust against the rising libertarian nationalist tide.

At the same time, the leadership of the Egyptian regime had decided, after a great deal of hesitation and difference in points of view, to dissolve the political parties and declare them incapable of leading domestic capitalism in its new phase. The 23 July revolution in Egypt launched itself, in the beginning, from the standpoint of the domestic bourgeoisie. In 1945, it considered itself to be the

representative of the "middle class". In effect, the "Free Officers" movement upon which that revolution was based combined a number of divergent political persuasions: leftist, liberal, rightist and conservative. However, the radical wing represented by Nasser was to have the upper hand and take over the leadership of the revolution.

Meanwhile, the disintegration of the communist movement, which had begun in the previous decade, went on unchecked during the fifties. Af the beginning of the decade, a number of university undergraduates formed a group which called itself the "Nucleus of the Egyptian Communist Party". A second organization emerged under the name of "al-Khubz w'al-Hurriya" (Bread and Freedom). Both organizations were in existence until the dissolution of political parties, at which time a new stage in the struggle between the marxist movement in Egypt and the Nasser regime exposed that movement to varying degrees of harassment and repression. The spells of outright antagonism were interspersed with rather short-lived attempts at conciliation and cooperation on the part of the ruling regime.

Syria, in the fifties, witnessed a number of interesting developments in the postures of the bourgeois political parties. Under the pressure of the swift changes which were affecting the political life of the country, the continued ascendancy of the Ba'th Party and the growth of the popular movement with its emphasis on progressive unionism, the then entrenched bourgeois parties were compelled to adapt to the times and include in their constitutions a number of phrases which paid lip service to the notion of social

justice. Certain wings of those parties, however, were earnest enough to make genuine progress in that direction and adopt certain "moderate" socialist postures. In addition, there existed a strong unionist trend which expressed itself, at the beginning of the fifties, in a dash towards unity with Iraq. In the context of that phase, this really meant a merger between such reactionary interests as the monarchy, in Iraq, and the bourgeoisie, in Syria, against the libertarian, progressive and unionist tendencies which were emerging in Syria under the leadership of the Ba'th Party.

The fifties also witnessed a marked escalation of colonialist plotting against the growth of the Arab liberation movement. This, of course, was done in collaboration with the reactionary forces, fascist parties and other elements which have always been the natural allies of colonialism in the Arab world. The exposure of the role played by the "Syrian National Party" in this suspect arena was one of the major factors which encouraged the progressive forces and political parties to form an alliance through which they aimed to defend themselves against the plots hatched by external and domestic foes. The alliance took the shape of a front that gathered together the Ba'th Party, the Communist Party and other patriotic democratic forces represented in the parliament to which the people had returned 17 Ba'thist members.

The Syrian political scene also witnessed the emergence, in the course of the fifties, of the "Movement of Arab Nationalists". The movement aimed at the achievement of political independence as an initial stage which the Arab Nationalists said was to

be followed by a stage of social liberation. Hence the movement rejected socialism and gave prominence to the objetive of Arab unity. This movement was not divergent from the Ba'th on the nationalist plane. On the social plane, however, it was the antithesis of Ba'thism. It opposed the Ba'th's linking of Arab unity with socialism and rejected its adherence to mass struggle. This, of course, was due to the fact that the Movement of Arab Nationalists had failed to shed its fascist outlook, in the area of organization. It must be said, however, that the movement was distinguished by its national organization upon which it depended throughout the fifties.

The Syrian Communist Party showed, during the fifties, that it was beginning to feel the weight of the reaction of Arab public opinion to its stand on the Palestinian Question, by modifying its equally negative stand on the issue of Arab unity. In 1950, the party declared, in one of its resolutions, that there was no contradiction between socialism and Pan-Arabism. This was a significant retreat from its previous insistence that national objectives could be achieved only through the revolution of the peasants and workers and the setting up of peasant and worker rule. This had meant that the Communist Party held that regionalist socialism was the means of achieving national objectives, whereas the Ba'th had insisted, since the forties that the struggle for unity and socialism is an indivisible whole and that the achievement of unity would only be possible through a unionist struggle and a revolutionary organization capable of embracing the whole of the Arab homeland and decisively and organically linking the strug-

gle of its toiling masses with the endeavour to achieve the two major targets of unity and socialism.

In Lebanon, both the Phalange and the Negada had a change of name, proclaiming themselves, in the process, as political parties. The first of the two organizations, taking the initiative, called itself "The Lebanese Phalange Party", in 1952. Two years later, the Negada followed suit and called itself The Negada Party. The Syrian National Party too had a change of name: it became The National Socialist Party. These changes, however, did not mean much. In the case of the first two organizations, they reflected a growing tendency towards more mingling of sectarianism with politics, while in the case of the Syrian party it was just a ploy to drop the rather embarrasing "Syrian" from the name of a political party operating in Lebanon.

In the course of the same period, there emerged in Lebanon a branch of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, side by side with two new parties, namely, "Hizb al-Ha'ia al-Wataniya" (The Patriotic Organization Party), in 1950 and "Hizb al-Wataneyin al-Ahrar" (The Liberal Patriots' Party), in 1957. Both parties were made up of bourgeois political elements under the leadership of Lebanese political figures who enjoyed a certain measure of popular support, particularly in the isolationist circles.

In Algeria, the People's Party held a congress in 1953 in which it affirmed its national character, stressed the necessity of shedding the narrow partisan outlook and adopting the concept and practice of revolutionary struggle. However, the party was soon to suffer a split on that very head: some of its

members advocated the immediate adoption without delay of revolutionary militancy, while others in its ranks counselled the adoption of a restrained peaceful line of action, at least until the party had completed the building of its organization. The upshot of all this was the dissolution of the party's central committee, at the hands of the party chairman, Massali al-Hajj, in the congress of 1954, that is to say, in the same year which witnessed the outbreak of the Algerian Revolution and the emergence of the Algerian Liberation Front which polarized the activity of all political parties.

In Tunisia, the Free Constitutional Party moved from opposition to political power following the initiation by its Chairman, al-Habib Bourgeiba, of negotiations with the French colonial authorities. This move led to conflict in the party's ranks, between the hardliners who advocated militancy, and the adherents of Bourgeiba's so-called tactical approach of "take what you can get and then start asking for some more". Such an approach was bound to invite opposition at a time when total independence was the strategic objective of the Arab people's struggle in Tunisia. Consequently, Bourgeiba found himself in conflict with both the Arab liberation movement and the radical elements in the popular Tunisian movements. As a result of this, his rule took the form of a one-party regime entirely dominated by one man through the exercise of ruthless repression.

In the Sudan, the fifties witnessed the emergence of yet another unionist party, namely, "Hizb al-Jabha al-Wataniya" (The Patriotic Front Party), in 1951. In the wake of the 23 July 1952 revolution in Egypt, the

Sudanese unionist parties formed a merger among themselves under the name of The Patriotic Unionist Party. The new party won the majority of seats at the general election of 1953, after the conclusion of the agreement between the Sudan, Egypt and Britain. Hizb al-Omma (The Nation's Party), which advocated secession from Egypt had a minority share of parliament seats. However, The Patriotic Unionist Party suffered a split, just before independence. Out of that split emerged Hizb al-Isteglal al-Jumhuri (The Republican Independence Party) and Ismail al-Azhari's Unionist Party which advocated unity only in name. Those who held on to their unionist convictions formed Hizb al-Sha'b al-Dimoqrati (The People's Democratic Party), in 1956 and raised the slogan of Pan-Arabism and the unity of the Arab people. However, the People's Party, which fought the election of 1958 on a unionist ticket, quite willingly formed a coalition government with al-Omma (The Nation's) secessionist party and remained in power up to the 1958 military coup.

Iraq, in the course of that phase which witnessed a fierce escalation of the struggle against colonialist pacts and the monarchy, underwent a significant development in the area of political parties. The most significant aspect of this development was the increasingly prominent role played by the Ba'th Party as the revolutionary vanguard of the unionist socialist struggle. This forced most reactionary parties to find a place for social issues in their political programmes. For one, the National Democratic Party had never referred openly to socialism, throughout the forties. Socialism was a bogey word and definitely taboo, as

far as the governments of the forties were concerned. They confused it with communism and reacted with harsh repression towards those who even spoke of it. In the fifties, thanks to the ascendancy of the Ba'th and the unionist socialist struggle it waged, this self-same National Democratic Party, which had been content to declare that it aimed at "overall reform in all the political, economic, social and cultural walks of life in Iraq", took heart, for the first time, and found a place for "social democracy" among its declared objectives.

As a matter of fact, the impact of socialism and socialist thought on the political scene in Iraq was so pronounced that even those parties whose class interests and ideological makeup put them on the other side of the fence from anything remotely connected with socialism, found it expedient to use the label of socialism. A number of reactionaries and feudal landowners went so far as to form a party which they labelled "Hizb al-Omma al-Ishtraki" (The Nation's Socialist Party). It is needless to point out that such reactionary elements could not be farther from socialism[36].

In 1950, the nationalist Iraqi youth established the Arab Ba'th Club, with the aim of gathering

36. The same thing happened, about the same time, in both Syria and Egypt. Faisal al-Assali founded Hizb al-Ta'awon al-Ishtraki (The Socialist Co-operative Party), in Damascus, and Ahmad Hussein Founded the "Socialist Party", in Egypt. The origins of both were fascist and reactionary.

This phenomenon may be attributed to a number of reasons, foremost among which was the objective maturity attained by the movement of the Arab masses and the fact that their objectives had

together all the country's nationalists round the call for Arab unity.

In 1951, a moderately reformist group emerged under the name of Hizb al-Jabha al-Sha'biya (The Popular Front Party). In 1952, the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party was established in Iraq, as a branch of the Pan-Arab centre in Damascus and there followed the November uprising in which the Ba'th took part alongside the other patriotic forces (the democrats and communists).

In 1953, a number of the Iraqi Communist Party cadres formed a splinter group which published an underground organ called "Ray't al-Shagheela" (The Workers' Flag). This splinter group took exception to a number of the party leadership's policies, such as the call for proclaiming the republic in Iraq, as it considered them to be extremist and counter-productive. The group hoped to be able to co-operate with the other national parties within the framework of a patriotic front.

In 1954, there was another uprising in Iraq, in the aftermath of which talks were initiated towards the setting up of a patriotic front. The front came into being after the tripartite aggression against Egypt, in 1956, and combined the National Democratic Party, the Communist Party, the Independence Party and

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become more explicit than ever before. It was thus increasingly obvious that the masses aspired, above all, after unity, freedom and socialism. Added to this, there was the changed stand of the Soviet Union towards the Third World nationalist movements after the death of Stalin, and the fact that a number of socialist parties came into power in Europe after World War II.

National Independents. Early in 1957, the Kurdistan Democratic Party declared its support of the front[37].

This was the front that, on the practical level, prepared the ground for the 14 July 1958 Revolution and supported it at a time when imperialism was busy preparing its counter-moves against the Syria-Egypt 1958 merger, the 14 July 1958 Revolution, which the imperialists wanted to divert from its unionist progressive path and Jordan, which they wanted to force back to the situation that existed before the beginnings of liberation initiated by the national movement. The Ba'th Party which was founded in Jordan early in the fifties, had been in the forefront of that movement.

C. The Sixties

This was a decade of setbacks and disunity. It witnessed the deterioration and final dissolution of the relationships which had developed between the major political forces of the Arab homeland. The alliance of the previous decade, between the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party and Nasser's revolution, broke up. The rapprochement of the two forces had soured, gave place to disagreement and dispute and, finally, turned to outright hostility. Consequently, the Syria-Egypt merger, which they had brought about in

37. The main objectives of the front were: the dissolution of Parliament, the overthrow of Nuri al-Said's regime, taking Iraq out of the "Baghdad Pact" the adoption of positive neutrality, the granting of democratic freedoms and the integration of Iraq's policies with those of the liberated Arab countries.

1958, disintegrated and the Arab world experienced the trauma of secession on 28 September 1961. This tendency to fall out was not limited to these two major political forces: it acquired the dimensions of a political epidemic in the Arab world and had a devastating effect on the relationships of all the progressive parties, nationalist and communist alike. The patriotic fronts which had been set up in the course of the previous decade, in a number of Arab countries, broke up. The combined forces of world imperialism and domestic reaction had succeeded in turning away all those parties from their preoccupation with the basic contradiction in the Arab situation, which had been implemental in bringing them together and uniting their forces and steered them into a morass of rivalry, dissesion and inter-party strife. In such an infected atmosphere, it was only natural that the old reactionary parties should raise their heads and thrive again. However, even those parties did not flourish for long. The contagion of dissension and strife caught up with them and they too suffered the same fat which had overtaken the progressives, so that not a single political movement in the Arab world was left intact without splintering. The splinter groups which proliferated were nimble enough in raising the slogans of the left or the right in order to provide themselves with propaganda cover. It is no wonder then that the period was one of intellectual and moral chaos. In the turbid waters of such chaos, militarist adventurism and the ravening hunger for power usually find their natural milieu. In that period of Arab history, they did just that and, having obtained a foothold, fed and exploited to the

full the schisms and dissensions with which the period abounded.

This, of course, made it easy for imperialism to court certain elements in various political parties and egg them on to adopt certain postures which could only serve the interests of imperialism and zionism. Quite naturally, this imperialist plotting was mainly directed, as a matter of the highest priority, against the Arab political party which constituted the gravest threat to the interests of the imperialist-zionist alliance, namely, the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party which had developed an extensive partisan and popular base throughout the Arab world and was able, in the beginning of the sixties, to retort quite effectively the affront of secession by assuming power in two Arab countries: Iraq, on 8 February 1963 and Syria, on 8 March of the same year.

The imperialist alliance agitated for the liquidation of the Ba'th. It was able to mobilize all the Ba'th's enemies in its determined drive to achieve that goal. It was even able to attract certain elements from inside the Party, and thus took place the setback of November 1963, in Iraq, and the renegade movement of 23 February 1966, in Syria.

Despite all this, the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party carried on its struggle, against the alliance of the enemies of Arab revolution, with greater determination, on the regional and Pan-Arab levels. The Party's 9th Pan-Arab Congress was held in February 1968 and, on 17 July 1968, it returned to power in Iraq. One of the consequences of this development was the return of normalcy to party life of Iraq and the creation of a climate favourable to the emergence of

the patriotic progressive front which was formed in conjunction with the Iraqi Communist Party, then with the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Independent Nationalists.

The political party scene in the Arab world during the sixties was not encouraging in the least. It was characterized by splits and divisions. The political alliances or fronts which had emerged in the previous decade disintegrated. There was a rash of dissolutions and bannings of political parties which was equalled in severity only by the proliferation of conflicting party organizations and splinter groups. However, side by side with such negative phenomena, there were the stirrings of a number of positive tendencies, such as the reviewing of past mistakes, self-criticism and analysis of crises and the causes of setbacks. The Arab Ba'th Party's endeavour in that direction was rather significant. It set the pace for the achievement of a new political maturity. In its 8th Pan-Arab Congress (1965), the Party embarked on an in-depth assessment of its experience in power in Iraq and, in its 9th Pan-Arab Congress (1968), it undertook a detailed examination of its crisis when it assumed power in Syria. After the setback of 5 June 1967, the Party tended to link the crisis of political parties in the Arab homeland with the crisis of Arab political life which intensified in the sixties under the impact of the conspirational imperialist-zionist-reactionary alliance.

Nasser seemed to believe that the call for a "Unified Arab Movement" in his address of 23 July 1963 was the adequate answer to "the historic national necessity which embodied the call of destiny".

The concept put forward by Nasserist writings was based on the rejection of the notion of political alliance or front which would combine a number of political parties. Nasserism based its political thinking on the necessity of dissolving an liquidating all political parties in favour of a unique national organization which regiments the masses in the thrust towards a "democratic socialist unionist libertarian revolution". The truth of the matter is that Nasserism's organizational concept was totalitarian and static rather than revolutionary, dynamic or realistically alive. It was, therefore, inescapable that Nasserism should ever be in conflict with the concept of political parties.

The same tendency towards the one-party system was also very much in evidence in the Maghrib countries, during the same decade. In Tunisia, there was the one party (The Free Constitutional) which held the reigns of Tunisia's political life. In Algeria, the Algerian Liberation Front, a carry-over from the fifties and its revolutionary formula, remained supreme, with a single party organization.

In Morocco, the political parties of the country, especially the National Union of Popular Forces, The Moroccan Labour Union and the Independent parties, were in a state of perpetual conflict with the monarchy. The Moroccan authorities were not content with repression against the parties inside Morocco: they carried the fight beyond the border and resorted to kidnapping and physical liquidation wherever they could. The murder of the militant al-Mehdi ben-Baraka is a case in point. This heinous crime illustrates the excesses of the reactionary regimes

against revolutionaries and the whole concept of political parties and militancy.

In the Sudan, the decade witnessed the emergence of Hizb Jabhat al-Mithaq al-Islami (The Front of Islamic Charter), a fundamentalist right-wing party which combined a number of Islamic political organizations, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, al-Rabeta al-Islamiya (The Islamic League) and Ansar al-Sunna (The Sunna Partisans). At the same time, there took place the merger of the National Unionist Party and the People's Democratic Party under the name of al-Hizb al-Dimoqrati al-Ettehadi (The Unionist Democratic Party), in 1967. The Communist Party was proclaimed legal after the 1964 revolution and a number of communists were returned to Parliament in the general election of 1965. However, the party dissolved itself towards the end of the same year. Thereafter, two new parties emerged, one in the north and the other in the south of Sudan and absorbed most of the Sudanese communists: al-Hizb al-Ishtraki al-Sudani (The Sudanese Socialist Party), in 1967, and Hizb al-Janub al-Dimoqrati (The Democratic Party of the South), one year earlier. In 1968, a third left-wing party emerged in the Sudan under the name of Hizm al-Ommal w'al-Fallaheen (The Workers and Peasants Party). In the course of the same period, there also appeared Monazzamat al-Ishtrakiyeen al-Arab (The Organization of Arab Socialists). Initially, this organization was in sympathy with both the Ba'th and Nasserism. However, by the end of the decade, most of its members had moved over to join the ranks of the Ba'th.

In 1969, a military coup brought a new regime

into power in the Sudan. The leadership of the new regime made public its opposition to the existence of political parties and promptly set about liquidating them, particularly the Communist Party which paid dearly for its July 1971 abortive coup.

In the course of the sixties, Lebanon's party life underwent a rather positive development. A new party which attracted to its membership many of the country's democratic intellectuals emerged in 1969 under the name of the Democratic Party. Moreover, the Lebanese Communist Party practiced self-criticism in its second congress (1968) and undertook the diagnosis of the errors of the preceding phases (from 1948 onward). The party focused on its errors in the area of national issues, its inability to assess objectively the Arab nationalist movement and its failure to recognize that movement's true revolutionary nature. The Lebanese Communist Party also stressed the errors of isolationism in its past political behaviour which stemmed from a sort of leftist infantilism as well as the errors of clinging to the coat tails of the bourgeois tendencies arising from right-wing deviations. Also worthy of note is al-Hizb al-Taqadummi al-Ishtraki (The Progressive Socialist Party) which tended, from 1964, to support the call of Arab unity and form alliances with the Ba'th Party, Nasserism and other left-wing forces.

D. The Seventies

The situation of Arab political parties in the seventies has been characterized by five distinctive features:

1. The continuation and deepening of revision and selfcriticism through more analysis of the objective factors which led Arab political life in a negative and erroneous direction.

2. The reappearance of the climate which favours party coalitions and the deepening of the experiment of political action in the context of a front through the increased maturity of well-thought out and more precise charters of national and political action.

3. Developing further the Arab party experience through a clearer and more practical definition of the relationship between theoretical principles, strategic planning and tactics necessitated by existing circumstances.

4. The continued hostility of the military regimes still in power in a number of Arab countries towards political parties.

5. The interaction of political parties with the methods of armed struggle, the detachments of the Palestinian Revolution and commando activities.

In the case of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, the 10th Pan-Arab Congress of March 1970 undertook an in-depth analysis of the nature of the current phase of Arab history and the class nature and class postures of the various political currents. In the light of this analysis, the Party Pan-Arab Congress formulated a strategy of party and political action on the regional, Pan-Arab and international levels. On the other hand, the 1974 Eighth Regional Congress in Iraq formulated, for the first time, a practical precise strategy aimed at coping with the various regional,

Pan-Arab and world issues which reflect on the political and party life of Iraq.

The unremitting efforts of the Ba'th, since the 17 July 1968 Revolution, towards the building of a patriotic front that combines the national parties and progressive forces in Iraq, were crowned with success on 16 July 1973, through the proclamation of a Patriotic and National Progressive Front that combined the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party and the Iraqi Communist Party. The charter of national action agreed upon by the two parties was published on 26 August 1973. The Progressive Front's supreme committee took another step in the right direction by extending the Front's membership to other parties and the representatives of other national tendencies, with a view to expanding further the representational base of the Front. The new forces which joined the Front are the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the patriotic and national independents. The political report of the 8th Congress of the ABSP defined as follows the justifications and motives of the Front in Iraq: giving precedence to the agreement between the constituent forces of the Front to combat colonialism, zionism and reaction over the secondary contradictions which exist among them.

The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party (ABSP) also made a direct contribution towards the struggle for the liberation of Palestine through the Arab Liberation Front, cohesion with all the detachments of armed struggle and the effective support extended to them.

It is noticeable, in this phase of development of Arab political party life, that those parties which had no place in their localist ideologies for the goal of

Arab unity or took a not too friendly stand towards it, underwent a positive development in that tended to consider that goal as central to their major objectives. The example of the patriotic parties in the Arab Maghrib and the communist parties in the Arab homeland at large is a significant indicator of the rapprochement taking place between the Arab political parties, regardless of their ideological differences.

The Secretary General of the Communist Party in Syria, for instance, had this to say, in 1971: "Arab unity is one of the major slogans of our party. It is not enough that we should support it: we have to struggle for the achievement of that goal". This, whithout doubt, is a positive development that plays an effective role in the rapprochement between the communist and nationalist parties of the Arab world.

There is also a significant shift in the stand of Arab communist parties on the Palestinian cause, especially in the case of those parties which have taken part in the armed struggle. It can be said that, to a very large extent, the contradiction which existed between the communist parties and the Arab nationalist current has disappeared, through the positive development in the stand of the communist parties on Pan-Arabism, Arab unity and the Palestinian cause.

While political parties are thus developing and progressing in many Arab countries, the negative anti-partisan posture still persists in a country like Lybia, for instance, as a carry over from the outlook of the sixties. To belong to a party, in that country, is synonymous with treason: "to be partisan is to be a traitor". The same applies to the Sudan. This country, which used to be a model of political maturity

and the democratic tradition, now bans all political parties. The events of July 1971 were a good pretext for this ban and, not content with this, the ruling regime indulged in a horrific campaign of liquidation against the Communist Party in the course of which it has executed a number of the party's oustanding leaders.

Despite their many difficulties and setbacks, however, the political parties of the Arab homeland continue to develop and progress alongside the rising curve of contemporary Arab awakening.

The General Development of Arab Society in the Post-War Period

I. On the Demographic Level

The post-war period has been one of swift population growth in the Arab world. Whereas the annual average rate of population growth in the first three decades of the twentieth century was estimated at slightly over 1%, it rose to about 2% in the fourth and fifth decades. The curve continued its steady rise until the growth rate averaged 2.4% to 3.4% over the years from 1950 through 1970.

Estimates indicate that the population of the Arab homeland reached 74 million, in 1950, and rose to about 125.7 million, in 1970, i.e. an increase of over 50 million in less than 20 years. UN population experts forecast a total of 205.7 million by the year 1980.

Naturally, average growth rates vary from one Arab country to the other and, consequently, the

contribution of each country to the global growth rate varies according to size of population. Four Arab countries alone, namely, Egypt, the Sudan, Morocco and Algeria, contributed no less than 64% of the overall population increase of the Arab world from 1950 through 1970.

The immediate post-war period was a significant turning point with regard to demographic trends in the Arab countries, due to the spread of improved health standards and measures of public hygiene. A swift fall in mortality rates is noticeable from 1945 to the present. The rate, which stood at 25.5 per thousand, in 1950/1955, fell to about 18.4 per thousand, in 1965/1970.

The net emigration figures for Arab nationals tended to diminish. Mainly, emigrants were from the highly educated and qualified professionals. The only major displacement of population in the Arab homeland, therefore, has been the uprooting of the Arab Palestinian people from their land and their dispersal over the face of the earth, especially in the other Arab countries.

Study of the age structure of Arab population as reflected by UN statistics reveals that the under 15 age group accounts for between 43 to 47 per cent of the total population, while age groups of over 15 to 64 account for only 52 percent as against 64 per cent in the developed nations. Thus the dependency ratio (i.e. the ratio of those in the dependent non-productive age groups to those in the working age groups) is rather high.

Such a high dependency ratio affects the per capita income and produces a marked imbalance in

the distribution of the national income in view of the fact that the state finds itself compelled to allocate large sums of public expenditure to the provision of the many services required by the young and non-productive. In this way, the rate of natural population increase becomes a liability and hampers economic development.

With regard to the social structure of population in the Arab world, demographic estimates of urban and rural populations indicate a rise of 24 million in the urban sector, from 18 million, in 1950, to 42 million, in 1970. In the rural sector, the global population figure of 58 million, in 1950, rose to about 80 million, in 1970, a net increase of 22 million. Thus over 52 per cent of the overall increase in population from 1950 through 1970 went to the urban sector.

The trend is made clearer when we study the proportional increase in population. The growth rate in the urban areas rose from 25 per cent, in 1950, to 35 per cent, in 1970, while it fell, over the same period, from 75 per cent to 65 per cent, in the rural areas. This phenomenon is attributable to the migration of increasing numbers of people from the rural to the urban areas. The tendency, of course, generates considerable social, economic and cultural problems, for the resultant accelerated growth rate of urban populations cuts down disposable employment vacancies, perpetuates low levels of productivity in industry, tends to lower wage levels and creates shortages in housing and other services.

Participation in economic activity in the Arab world is limited to 26 per cent of the total population as against 40 per cent in other developing countries

and 45 per cent in the developed nations. This means that half the disposable potential of the Arab world's human resources is idle and demonstrates the heavy burden of dependency shouldered by those who do participate in economic activity.

Another negative aspect in this area has to do with women's involvement in economic activity. In the Arab world, this is still as low as 5 per cent as against 38 per cent in the developed nations and 49.9 per cent in the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, the post-war economic development of the Arab world has been accompanied by a significant shift in the relative value of those involved in agricultural activity in favour of those involved in industry and services. Most of this shift in relative value, however, has been in favour of the services sector rather than industrialization and economic development at large.

The foregoing shows that the Arab world experienced a considerable rise in population growth rates in the post-war period, through the combined effect of declining mortality rates and a birth rate that has always tended to be significantly high. As a result of this, many Arab countries have been encountering economic, social and demographic difficulties, especially with regard to the size and structure of their populations and the human environment as a whole.

Though the global population increase of the Arab world does create a demographic problem in the contemporary sense of the word, thanks to the extensive area of the Arab homeland as a whole and its natural wealth, it does create a population distribution problem which will persist and become more

acute so long as the Arab homeland remains in its present partitioned state. A number of Arab countries will continue to suffer from the problems of overpopulation while others will continue to be handicapped by problems of underpopulation and chronic shortages of manpower. In this sense, the phenomenon constitutes one of the impediments in the area of economic development in the Arab world.

Solving the problems of economic development in the Arab world depends on the formulation of sound policies capable of bringing about the fundamental changes needed in the structure of Arab society and its economic, social, cultural and political institutions. This, in turn, requires the formulation of a sound demographic policy that takes its point of departure from a unionist outlook transcending the present partition, intelligently utilizes the disposable human resources of the Arab homeland as a whole and wards off the dangers of the population explosion which has been increasingly overwhelming the world in the post-war period.

II. On the Economic Level

We can sum up as follows the general trends of economic development during the post-war period: liberation from economic dependence, inter-Arab economic co-operation, planning and development, striving for socialism and the building of a technological base.

These areas sum up, in fact, the Arab world's major problems and constitute its interrelated in-

teractive basic contradictions. This, of course, leads us back to the colonialist legacy. When the tide of colonialism receded, in phases, after World War II, it left the Arab homeland in the grip of the contradictions of partition, backwardness and dependency to the capitalist system. Hence, military evacuation and the formal political independence that went with it meant only one thing: that the Arabs had to embark on a new stage of struggle in the course of which they had to cope with the many problems bequeathed to the Arab world by colonialism, liberate themselves from their economic dependence to the colonial powers and rid the homeland of the partition and backwardness which colonialism left behind. The campaign spearheaded by the Ba'th against the Tapline company in Syria at the end of the forties and later for the building of the oil refinery in Homs, at the beginning of the fifties, the Suez Canal nationalization in Egypt, in 1956, the nationalization of oil in Iraq and the nationalization in Algeria, Lybia and Syria of the companies which were carry overs from the days of colonialist economic and political domination were steps on the road of Arab economic liberation from the shackles of the capitalist system.

It was only natural that this process of economic transformation should be limited to those Arab countries which had been touched by the wand of Arab awakening. It was in those countries that the Arab liberation movement had made real progress and the old regimes had been replaced by new ones that were intent on national liberation.

If we take Iraq as an example, we shall find that the oil companies were the virtual rulers of the

country and, until the 14 July 1958 revolution put an end to their domination, distorted Iraq's economy in such a way that made it completely dependent on oil and limited most of its foreign trade to dealings with the Western capitalist countries. Even after the 14 July 1958 revolution, those companies persisted in obstructing every attempt at economic liberation and continued to be the fountainhead of sedition, coups and plots which aimed at destabilizing the country politically and obstructing its economic development. The import/export structure of Iraq's foreign trade did not begin to change until the 17 July 1968 Revolution took that vital sector of the economy in hand and put it under the control of the Public Sector. This move aimed at liberating the national economy from dependence on the economies of foreign powers, putting an end to the uni-faceted economy, building a viable diversified economic structure and transforming it into a socialist economy.

One year after the 17 July Revolution, the beginnings of change became evident in the geographic pattern of Iraq's exports and imports in line with the liberation policy adopted by the Revolution, as shown in the following table[38] (page 139):

Thus started the process of disengaging the policies and economies of many an Arab country from the capitalist world, gradually (from the fifties, in the

38. Hisham Metwalli: *The Economics of Iraq,* Centre of Economic Studies and Abdul Rahman Jalili: *Lectures on the Iraqi Economy,* Damascus, 1964 —The High Institute of Arab Studies, Cairo, 1955.

	Share of Exports		*Share of Imports*	
Area	*1959*	*1969*	*1959*	*1969*
The Arab Countries	32.9%	56.9%	3.6%	7.6%
The Socialist Countries	12.5	12.8	5.-	19.6
The Wester European Countries:	20.6	3.2	55.4	42.2
Other Countries:	34.-	27.1	36.-	30.6
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

case of Syria and Egypt, and the sixties, in the case of Iraq, Algeria and Lybia).

This drive towards economic liberation went hand in hand with a unionist tendency which aimed at linking the conomies of the Arab homeland and achieving Arab economic unity. As early as 1945, the Charter of the Arab League stipulated that it was neccesary to "achieve Arab co-operation on economic and social issues" (Article 2 of the Charter). Later on, the Beirut conference of Arab Finance and Economy Ministers (23 September 1952) looked into the possibilities of Arab economic co-ordination. The outcome of that meeting was an agreement concluded on 25 May 1953, which provided for certain trade facilities to be extended by the signatory Arab countries to one another in addition to a number of measures relating to transit trade.

This increasing interest in achieving Arab economic co-operation, which was a post-war develop-

ment, manifested itself in one of the two following forms:

1. *Bilateral agreements* relating to payments, the servicing and repayment of debts, easing of or eliminating altogether restriction on the free movement of commodities between the two parties to the agreement and the reduction of customs tariffs on manufactured goods. Such agreements, however, remained at the mercy of the ups and downs of the political climate between the two contracting countries, as in the case of the agreement concluded between Syria and Egypt on 31 August 1958, in the wake of the two countries' merger. The agreement was in eclipse after the secession, but was later to revive, when things got better between the two countries, in May 1969.

2. *Collective agreements.* Foremost among those were: the agreement relating to reciprocal trade facilities and measures regulating the transit trade, mentioned hereabove and the agreement relating to commercial credits and the movement of capital between the Arab League countries.

These attempts at coordination and cooperation, however, demonstrated that economic integration could be achieved only through the full amalgamation of the Arab countries' economies, with the attendant increase in the volume of trade and overall expansion of the Arab market that would ensure the viability of the Arab economy. It is self-evident that, in the case of many industries, the adoption of modern production methods with a view to reducing production cost requires, as of necessity, a certain level of output which could never be absorbed by the market of any

one country alone. Hence, the market has to be expanded to embrace the whole of the Arab homeland. Moreover, the process of economic incorporation in its advanced stages, is, by its very nature, conducive to the creation of conditions which favour an increased volume of investment and widen the scope of its utilization. This, in turn, leads to a much higher rate of economic growth in those countries which incorporate their economies.

It was with this object in mind that a number of Arab countries concluded the 6 June 1962 Agreement of Economic Unity.

There was also the question of technology. One should remember that Arab society, over that phase, was predominantly rural. This fact accounted, to a large degree, for the rather slugglish rate of technology transfer in the Arab homeland. Political and economic liberation, however, were soon to rectify this and boost the tendency towards a heightened tempo of technology transfer. Social development also played a significant part in this respect. Egypt was in the forefront of the Arab countries which were able to interact with the post-war technological developments and make good use of the technological progress attained by the advanced countries. Other Arab countries, such as Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, were soon to follow suit.

However, the real drive towards science and technology had to wait until the Arab countries embarked on the process of economic development and did not start in earnest until the Arab nation faced its major challenge in the wake of the 1967 defeat. It was only then that the Arabs moved, in

their striving to break the vicious circle that made such a defeat possible, towards scientific planning in the area of technology transfer.

The effects of the June 1967 war on the Arab nation were similar to those of the Second World War on the countries of Europe, the United States and Japan insofar as it impelled the Arabs to stop and take stock of their situation, revealed to them the areas of backwardness, determined their position vis-a-vis the current of world progress and the challenges posed by imperialism and zionism and gauged their ability to achieve their ambitions as a nation.

Notwithstanding, the rate of investment realized by most Arab countries in the areas of science and technology, even in its loosest difinition, does not exceed a measly 20% of the aggregate figure of investment: a percentage which is stil minimal in comparison with the advanced countries.

The effects of this persisting aspect of backwardness reflect on the output per head of working population in agriculture, the manufacturing industries and other productive sectors. The following table, compiled from the World Bank statistics (1971) demonstrates the existing gap in respect of output per head in agriculture and underlines the pressing need for a more intensive transfer of technology if the gap is to be narrowed.

Thus, the impact of the Second World War on the development of technology in the Arab countries was rather slow and an indirect outcome of the dependence of the economies of most Arab countries, for too long, on the Western economies, a state of affairs

The Output Per Head in Agriculture
(The Value Added Per Head in U.S. Dollars)

Country:	*Year:*	*Productivity*
Saudi Arabia	1969	166
Syria	1969	238
Iraq	1969	234
Lebanon	1969	251
Jordan	1968	296
Japan	1968	1172
United Kingdom	1968	6352
Yugoslavia	1968	6495
United States	1968	6628

which impeded the development of the Arab economies.

Moreover, one of the telling aspects of the advent of modern technologies to the Arab homeland is that they found their way into the Arab way of life through the striving of a number of Arab countries to equip themselves for defence against the continued zionist imperialist aggression against the Arab homeland. Side by side with this, modern technologies found their way into the Arab world through the drive towards economic development and the movement of modernization fostered by the systems of public education and their institutions.

Lastly, the economic development of the Arab world after the Second World War tended as a rule towards planning, the formulation and implementation of development plans which took place, in the case of some Arab countries, within the framework of socialist transformation. The laws of agrarian reform,

the nationalization of the banking sector and major industries, the laws regulating trade, the predominance of the public sector and the nationalization of natural resources, such as oil, impelled a number of Arab countries, such as Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Algeria and Libya, in varying degrees, towards a non-capitalist approach to economic development. In Iraq, this trend developed into an overall economic revival that followed a constantly mounting curve towards the building of a national base for socialist transformation and the realization of an agricultural and industrial revolution within a Pan-Arab context that takes into consideration the requirements of Arab economic integration and the prerequisites of economic development in the Arab homeland as a whole.

In the area of development planning, Iraq witnessed, after World War II, an attempt to drawn up the first ever economic report on the country. This task was entrusted to Lord Soolter, who submitted his report in 1954. The Soolter Report embodied the general framework of many of the projects included in subsequent development programmes. The Reconstruction Council was set up to plan and implement such programmes and continued to function in this dual capacity until the 14 July 1958 revolution, when it was replaced by the Ministry of Reconstruction which was later replaced by the Ministry of Planning. However, economic planning proper was not known in Iraq until the 17 July 1968 Revolution introduced the first five-year plan (1969-1974) which was followed by the current five-year plan. Both plans were formulated within a revolutionary scientific context deriving from the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party's

ideology which aims at the achievement of unity, freedom and socialism in the Arab homeland as a whole.

In Egypt, the first step towards economic planning was taken through the promulgation of Law No. 213 of 1952 by virtue of which the Permanent Council for the Development of National Production was established. The Nasser revolution in Egypt focused on the programming of the economy in three-year plans. There was quite a number of such plans, among which there was the 1958-1961 plan which combined the Syrian and Egyptian regions. However, the Egyptian planning experience was riddled with blunders, lacking in finance and beset by various negative factors.

In Syria, right after the War, there were attempts at formulating economic plans in the real sense of the word. However, political factors were not favourable to the success of such attempts. There were a number of reasons behind the repeated failure, among which were political instability and the tendency of reactionary governments to entrust economic planning to certain quarters whose first interest was to gear economic development in the Arab countries to the interests of the capitalist system and formulate development plans on the basis of continued dependence on that system. This happened in Syria, in 1948, when the government called in the Alexander Gibb Organization to study the economic situation in the country and submit its recommendations. The organizations presented the government with the 1948-1958 ten-year plan. However, it was a number of years later

that Syria witnessed its first investment programme. A seven-year (1955-1961) plan was announced on 29 August 1955. The national defence effort necessitated by the 1956 aggression made it impossible for the government, only a few months after the announcement of the plan, to implement the extraordinary budget relating to the said plan. Expenditure on the projects of the plan was discontinued until the formulation of the ten-year (1958-1968) plan under the Syrian-Egyptian merger. This latter plan focused on the development of agriculture. However, the secession of the two countries caused the process of planning and development to falter anew, until the development drive shifted towards socialist transformation after the advent of the Ba'th into power on 8 March 1963.

In the Sudan, development programmes were formulated in the years 1946 through 1956 which focused on public utility projects, social services and communications. In the following years (1956 through 1960) priority was given to the expansion of cotton growing. There followed the ten-year (1961-1971) plan which focused on the raising of the national income, export expansion and the production of import substitutes.

Other Arab countries, such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the Arabian Gulf countries began to adopt the concept of planning the public sector's investments. However, these countries have not moved towards the linking of economic development with changing the current production relationships of society.

Thus, economic development of the Arab homeland in the post-war period took place with the following three frameworks:

1. The capitalist framework which remained dependent on the capitalist system. Hence, it continued to be an auxiliary development and a tributary to the interests of the imperialist reactionary alliance.

2. The libertarian framework which dissociated itself from dependence on the centre and embarked on a number of attempts at changing the economic setup through development and the adoption of state capitalism in the organization of the public sector.

3. The libertarian Pan-Arab socialist framework which linked the process of development with changing the capitalist production relationships and building the material base for socialist transformation in the context of an overall Pan-Arab libertarian perspective that embraces the whole of the Arab homeland.

III. On the Social Level

Arab society underwent a number of quantitative and qualitative changes over the past thirty years which have left their imprint on its geographic, cultural and national makeup and prepared the ground for the emergence of new patterns of behaviour and distinct contradictions between the older and younger generations. The social structure, class strata and social mobility of Arab society have been subject to quantitative and qualitative transformations whose most significant aspects may be summed up as follows:

A. The Phenomenon of Urbanization

This phenomenon became noticeable in most Arab countries after the Second World War through 3 main tendencies:

1. The tendency towards the settlement of bedouins and their social and cultural reorientation in the crucible of contemporary civilization. This entailed changing the bedouin's pattern of life in all its social and economic aspects, i.e. ownership, labour, wealth and the division of labour between the two sexes. It also entailed changing his social values.

Oil played a crucial part in all this and strengthened the tendency in those areas where the bedouin sector was predominant. Bedouin communities in the oil regions received the influences of civilization with a marked degree of readiness for adaptation. It was not the motor car, train, aeroplane and other means of transportation alone which wrought the change: agricultural machines, irrigation pumps, the oil industry, the use of modern weaponry, the telephone, cinema and television all played an important part in developing the material life of bedouin society, created significant challenges to traditional values and old customs and a wide gap between the younger and older generations. In some of the more advanced Arab societies there is no longer an effective quantitative or specific presence of the bedouin phenomenon which is on the way to extinction. The bedouin sector which, for instance, represented 5% of the total population of Iraq up to 1947[39], has di-

39. The Economic Indicators of Iraq's Economic Development, The Ministry of Planning, Iraq, 1975.

minished and is no longer mentioned in 1947 statistcs.

2. A decline in the rate of growth of the rural sector and a corresponding rise in the rate of growth of the urban. In Iraq, for instance, this development was as follows in the post-war years:

Year	*Rural Sector*	*Urban Sector*
1947	57 %	38 %
1960	56.4	43.6
1970	42.2	57.8
1974	37.4	62.2

In Egypt, there was a similar development, as shown by the following table[40]:

Year	*Rural Sector*	*Urban Sector*
1974	67 %	33 %
1960	63	73
1966	60	40

3. Migration from the rural to the urban areas which has a distinctive character that sets it apart from this type of internal migration in other countries. In the Arab homeland, the collective spirit is predominant in the rural areas where values are based on tribal ties and obedience to the head of clan or tribe. Migration to the cities means a total change in concepts and values and the emergence of a new

40. The Central Organization of Mobilization and Statistics, *Population Increase in UAR,* 1966.

generation dominated by the spirit of individuality and imbued with new cultural values. Work in industry, services, construction and state institutions with all that entails of interaction with others, that is to say with phenomena wich are non-existent in the rural areas, require of the migrant to the city adaptation to a new outlook and mode of life and the acquisition of new values, concepts and attitudes of which he had no need in the village where life is simple enough.

On the other hand urban society itself is affected by this phenomenon and by the ever pressing needs of development in this age. Consequently, the major cities of the Arab world underwent a number of significant transformations which had far-reaching effects on their demographic makeup, the quality and complexity of life of their inhabitants whose social outlook and values were changed as a result of the increased dependence of Arab society on industry and modern management.

B. The Development of Arab Society's Class Structure

It was inescapable that the development of the means of production in agriculture and industry, in conjunction with the then emerging trends of socio-economic change and the postwar struggle of the Arab nation against the imperialist-zionist-reactionary alliance should lead, in many Arab countries, to a major development in the class structure of Arab society and cause the dominant influence of the

feudal and bourgeois classes on the political life of that society to recede. The working class had realized a great deal of accelerated growth over the three post-war decades. Moreover, the political consciousness of that class and its impact on political life in general had considerably increased. Added to this, there was the growth of the middle class and the small bourgeoisie and the latter's ascendancy to the leadership of political power in most Arab countries, via the militarist phenomenon. The alliance between feudalism and domestic and foreign capital put the peasants, workers, soldiers and patriotic intellectuals on one side of the social fence and the exploiter class represented by the alliance of feudalism and domestic and foreign capital, on the other. Added to this, there was the alliance of world zionism with the capitalist camp. Out of the sum-total of these factors, class conflict in the Arab homeland acquired three basic aspects:

1. *A regionalist aspect* affected by the partition of the Arab world and the direct circumstances surrounding the various classes.
2. *A Pan-Arab aspect* which interacted with the movement of Arab struggle and acquired the form of an alliance between the forces of the right, on the one hand, and that of political fronts and associations between the forces of the left, the progressive forces in general and the working class all over the Arab world, on the other.
3. *An international aspect* which has to do with the relationship between the imperialist system and the countries of the Arab homeland. This is a

relationship that has been pulled each other way by the various forces involved in the conflict. On the one hand, it takes the form of an imperialist-zionist-reactionary alliance and, on the other, that of an expanded national patriotic grouping of the forces engaged in resisting this common danger (the imperialist-zionist-reactionary alliance) and mortal enemy facing the broad Arab masses and all the sectors of Arab society.

The student movement in the Arab homeland made its presence felt in the post-war years. Arab students, in the pre-war years, were mostly from the bourgeoisie and small bourgeoisie. Notwithstanding, they were involved in the patriotic struggle, because the classes they belonged to did not object to the popular struggle against colonialism. On the other hand, their education, social background and the very fact of their youth made their interaction with the movement of mass struggle inevitable. After the War, however, the class structure of the student group underwent a significant quantitative and qualitative change which was brought about by the expansion of the education system and the fact that increasing numbers of the sons of the working class tended to enrol in the schools, after independence. This had a direct effect on education as a whole, with regard to the number of schools, curricula, text-books and general orientation. The outcome was the emergence of a large and dynamic student sector which interacted with the movement of struggle and which was equipped, thanks to the activism of the political parties which had developed greatly in the meantime,

with an enlightened awareness of the problems and contradictions of Arab society. Thus the will to struggle was sharpened among Arab students who did become a political force to be reckoned with and played a significant part in the political activity of the post-war period with all its political, social, economic and cultural upheavals.

The emergence of the union of Arab workers on 24 March 1956, under the name of the "International Union of Arab Workers" was a major step towards the propagation of trade unionist thought and the fostering of political awareness in the ranks of the Arab working class. It also made that class aware of the role it should play in the struggle aimed at the unification of the Arab homeland, its liberation from imperialist domination and its defence against the plots hatched by the zionist-reactionary alliance.

Side by side with this increased awareness of the working class, there were a number of attempts at the intermingling of people within the framework of the agricultural and industrial development drive. That is to say, economic co-operation between the Arab countries acquired a new dimension and was no longer limited to the conclusion of economic agreements. This new type of co-operation tended to manifest itself in practices which aimed at minimizing the effects of the artificial partition of the Arab homeland which swallows up every regional localist endeavour and perpetuates the conditions favourable to the imperialist encirclement of the Arab world. The wide-spread exchange of experts between the Arab countries and the co-operation experiment between Iraq and Egypt which involves the movement of

Egyptian workers and peasants to Iraq where they work at their trades or are given land to farm are all new phenomena of the post-war period.

The nationalization operations which were carried out in the liberated Arab countries, the agrarian reform experiments in Syria, Iraq, Egypt and Algeria have been conducive to a number of significant socio-economic changes in such areas as ownership, production relationships, the family, its income and expenditure and education. One consequence of this has been the intensification of the alliance of the exploited, oppressed and deprived classes, especially in those countries which preceded others to industrialization and agrarian reform, thanks to the awareness gained through this major process of socio-economic change.

On the whole, there has been a great deal of change in the old setup of Arab society which was inherited from the pre-war periods, namely, that of a society mainly based on the relations of kinship which subsisted on the output of a rudimentary technology, small productive units and a meagre accumulation of capital. There is no doubt that the importance of oil to the world economy played a major part in the acceleration of economic growth in the Arab world after the War. The burgeoning oil industry in the post-war years contributed to the emergence of a new more sophisticated cultural environment and helped to put the bedouins in contact with many of the aspects of modern mechanical civilization. They were also put in contact with modern city life and thus had a chance to compare the bedouin way of life with living in the urban areas. Side by side with their new

fascination with the cities, employment with the oil companies helped to attract them to the aspects of modern living and changed many of their old patterns of thought and traditional bedouin customs. They were provided with housing, clinics and clubs and acquainted with many ot the ways of modern life. Thus oil became a major factor of socio-economic change in the rural and bedouin communities. The economic incentive was implemental in persuading the bedouins to take to a new pattern of settled living. Moreover, the oil industry contributed to the changing of many of the old bedouin concepts, especially with regard to certain types of work which the bedouins used to abhor. It was not long before many of them were working as drivers of various types of vehicles or active in the civil service, the army or the police. In this way, they came into closer contact with the urban centres, population agglomerates and modern social concepts.

We may add to this class phenomenon another which is closely related to it, namely that of ethnic and religious minorities which, in its turn, is not without its class basis. Within the framework of the movement of national liberation in the Arab world, a new and significant development has taken place in dealing with this phenomenon.

When colonialism withdrew from the Arab homeland, it left behind a land which it had partitioned on more than one level. Not content with the segmentation of the Arab homeland into states and mini-states, colonialism had given a high priority to sowing dissension and the seeds of division between human beings. It fostered this vicious type of partition with a

great deal of meticulous care and set up a number of its agents in the leaderships of those minorities which were suffering the same type of injustice and exploitation which was the common lot of the toiling masses of the Arab people. Thus it was that instead of posing the problem from a socialist standpoint, i.e. in a class context, with a view to putting an end to all types of exploitation, or from a national libertarian standpoint that aims at promoting brotherly relationships between various religious and ethnic groups in the Arab homeland, it was posed in a manner which, in many instances, was hostile to the Arab liberation movement and with the express purpose of attacking the advanced outposts of Arab struggle. The colonialist tactic was to dominate the minority movements with feudal leaderships who were agents in the pay of colonialism and who, very naturally, posed the class demands of those minorities in a nationalist, chauvinist, separatist context or in the framework of a fanatic confessionalist stand that is completely isolationist and closed upon itself.

This was the endeavour of colonialism. However, the Algerian revolution, in the Arab Maghrib, the experiment of the Ba'th, in Iraq and the Palestinian revolution have succeeded in facing up to this challenge and solving the problem in favour of the Arab liberation movement.

The Berbers, who fought side by side with the Arabs in the Revolution of the Thousand Martyrs (the Algerian revolution), have gained, through their militancy within the framework of the Arab liberation movement, both their rights and the rights of the Arab people.

Armed struggle for the liberation of Palestine has created a revolutionary unity, not only between the religious and ethnic minorities of the Arab world on the Palestinian arena, but also between militants who belong to various nationalities. The experiment of the Ba'th in Iraq, which embodied in the Proclamation of 11 March 1970 the ideal formula for the relationship between Arab nationalism and Kurdish nationalism in Iraq, has shown the way towards the solution of the minorities problem on a truly democratic basis that has taken its point of departure from the reaffirmation of the national rights of the minorities, granting the autonomy, laying the foundations of accelerated growth and development in the Kurdish regions, the implementation of the Agrarian Reform Law and the setting up of a coalition, in the form of a progressive front which combines the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, the Kurdistan Democratic Party side by side with the Communist Party.

Beside the 11 March 1970 Proclamation which embodied the Ba'th Party's human and democratic outlook and its scientific socialist ideology, the Revolution Command Council in Iraq issued its Decree dated 24 December granting the cultural rights of the Turkeman minority. This was followed by a Decree granting the cultural rights of the syriac-speaking minorities: the Assyrians, Chaldeans and Syriacs, on 16 April 1972.

In addition to the problem of ethnic and religious minorities, there has been another problem relating to the military sector. The militarist phenomenon has never been isolated from the class problem. The repeated military coups in the Arab homeland after

World War II were not only the manifestation of the overall crisis of the Arab nation which resulted from the success of the imperialist-Arab reactionary alliance in establishing the zionist state: they were also a manifestation of one of the aspects of the Arab liberation movement and, later, of one of the aspects of its crisis also.

The negative changes which reflected on the Arab situation after World War II put the Arab people face to face with a new challenge which threatended their future prospects and very existence, at a time when the then nascent Arab armies, despite their national and popular roots, were held captive by the bourgeois reactionary regimes whose vital interests made them the natural allies of the forces which were dead set against that Arab liberation movement. Hence, military coups were, more often than not, the only means of dislodging the forces of reaction from power, in the absence of a popular movement and mass struggle crystalized enough to rise to the level of popular revolution.

However, most of the militarist regimes which came into power through coups that raised democratic, libertarian and unionist slogans could not but reveal the petit bourgeois makeup of the officers which exploited that phase for their own ends and never had the intention of steering things in a direction that would have served the ends of the Arab liberation movement. Such elements could not but create a wide gap between slogans and practice and were soon to turn into a new class whose hold on power and vital interests were inimical to the Arab liberation movement. Worse still, the inevitable bu-

reaucratic mentality of this new class, its regional localist interests and its very loyalties led it to adopt a negative and, at times, repressive attitude vis-à-vis the unionist mass movement. The real shift, when it did take place, from the bourgeois and petit bourgeois concept of Pan-Arabism to the socialist outlook which went hand in hand with the deepening of hostility towards imperialism and its allies: zionism and the forces of reaction, and the crystallization of the revolutionary concept of Arab unity, constituted a transformation which was the start of a new phase wherein the militarist regimes were exposed and shown up for what they really were: anachronisms which were unable to survive the development of the social and class foundations of Arab society.

The years from 1945 to the end of the forties were a period of preparation for the major changes which were to take place in the fifties. Zionism was the most important factor which forced the Arab countries to allocate the greatest part of their budgets to military expenditure. Consequently, the military establishment had to play a significant part in the political life of those countries and, thereby, contribute to the toppling of the reactionary regimes.

However, the increased maturity achieved by the Arab liberation movement, thanks to its rich experience which, through the sixties and seventies, has been full of setbacks and object lessons, enabled that movement to outgrow the military regimes with their narrow regional localist outlook and bureaucratic penchant which bespoke their petit-bourgeois origins. It was becoming increasignly evident that those regimes could not but adopt a conciliatory stance

vis-à-vis the forces of reaction and the imperialist-zionist alliance. As a matter of fact, experience showed that they tended to move towards a more or less overt rapprochement with the reactionary regimes in other Arab countries. In contrast, the revolutions whose military establishment adhered to a constant revolutionary ideology and was kept under the supervision of a revolutionary political party, as was the case with the Ba'th, in Iraq, the Algerian Liberation Front, in Algeria and the National Front, in Democratic Yemen, tended to tame and develop the militarist phenomenon.

The class structure of those latter models of revolutions was of a toiler militant nature that, from the outset, was committed to a revolutionary ideology which embodied the interests of the toiling masses and working class of the Arab homeland. Hence, those models constituted a positive and objective development in the march of the Arab liberation movement. The obsession of the military establishment with power caused it to deviate from its fundamental task. This was a fact which was brutally brought home to everyone by the defeat of June 1967. The trauma of that defeat highlighted a number of fundamental facts which contributed to the development of a more mature outlook regarding the role of that establishment. Those facts were the following:

1. The development of the army of the zionist enemy over the years from 1948 through 1967 had been beyond the comprehension of those who were responsible for the Arab armies on June 5th 1967.

2. The army, as an institution, cannot exist in

isolation from the sum-total of a number of highly complex factors, formulae and relationships and, unless there is a true balance and a state of co-equality between the parties to those relationships, the military establishment becomes without merit or justification. By this we mean such relationships as exist between the army and the national movement, the army and the process of industrial development and the army and scientific and technological progress.

3. A truly modern army cannot be built in the Arab homeland under the conditions of partition. Modern armament depends on the existence of a military-industrial complex. The existence of such a complex depends on the availability of scientific, technological and financial resources of such magnitude that they can never be made available without the pooling of all the potentials of the Arab homeland as a whole.

Any amount of planning that aims at facing up to the challenge posed by the imperialis-zionist-reactionary alliance without embracing the Arab nation as a whole and having recourse to the full economic, military and political potential of the Arab homeland will amount to nothing but a breach which will give access to imperialist-zionist aggression and enable it to achieve its objectives against the unity of the Arab nation, the liberation of its territories and the building of a socialist society.

4. Arab struggle is an indivisible whole. The military sector is part and parcel of the potentials and capabilities of the Arab masses. Consequently, failure to view the role of this sector in the context of a comprehensive plan capable of achieving the neces-

sary cohesion between the actions of the military establishment and the armed popular struggle of the masses and thus links the concept and strategy of Arab revolution with its numerous and integrated instruments will ever riddle with fatal weaknesses the very basis of the Arab nation's confrontation with imperialist-zionist struggle and expose it to failure and setbacks.

In the light of the foregoing facts and the new insights provided by the October 1973 War, it is evident that the militarist phenomenon should take its place in the scheme of things instead of being one of the facets of the Arab liberation movement's recurring crisis.

IV. Educational Development

Education was one of the major sectors influenced by the positive developments of the post-war era in the Arab world.

A. In the area of *primary education,* as well as that of educational targets, there was a significant development in a Pan-Arab direction. This development was initiated by the cultural treaty concluded by the Arab countries on 27 November 1945. In most Arab countries there was a determined drive to improve the quality and methods of education. This included a rescued operation which aimed at ridding the curricula and text-books of the colonialist content which was a carry-over from the pre-war era.

In the Arab Maghrib, there emerged a tendency towards the Arabization of education. There were very significant achievements in that direction in the various areas of education. In a number of Arab countries, the targets of education were linked with the objectives of Arab renaissance and the Pan-Arab, libertarian, socialist tendency became the axis round which the targets of education revolved.

On the quantitative level, annual growth rtaes realized an increase of 7.5% over the years from 1945 through 1950, which peaked to 11% over the period from 1950 through 1960 and levelled out at 9.2% from 1960 through 1970.

The situation was reversed in respect of state and private-sector education. There was a steady expansion of state education and a corresponding contraction of private-sector education. The overall average of annual growth rates for government schools was 9.2% and, in the case of private-sector schools, only 5.8%, over the years from 1960 through 1970. Similarly, the overall average of the annual growth rate of the number of pupils attending foreign schools fell to 6.7%, over the same period.

The annual growth rate of females attending government primary schools rose to 20.3% - 21.8% in the fifties and sixties. The growth rate of the number of teachers realized an increase which corresponded to the growth rates of the number of pupils.

It is noticeable that Syria, the Sudan and Libya gave a special priority, in the immediate post-war years, to combating illiteracy. The rest of the Arab countries followed suit in the fifties. In the sixties, the Supreme Council for Combating Illiteracy was set up

in the Arab homeland with the collaboration of representatives from all Arab countries. The Arab Regional Organization for Combating Illiteracy was also established in the League of Arab States. Estimates indicate [41] that the ratio of illiteracy among adults (15 to 25 years of age), which was as high as 75% in 1960, fell to 55%, in 1970. It is expected to fall below 25% by 1980. It also expected that by 1980 all Arab children of school age will have been enrolled and that the global number of pupils enrolled in the primary schools will have risen to 27 million as against 13 million, in 1970, and 7 million, in 1960.

B. In the area of *secondary education*, there was, in addition to the Arabization drive in the Maghrib countries, a tendency to link secondary education with the requirements of developments and the training of the necessary cadres. One of the outstanding characteristics of the post-war era was the profusion of laws which aimed at reforming and organizing secondary education, especially in Syria, Egypt, Libya, Iraq, the Sudan and Yemen.

One area on which educational reform focused in Syria, Egypt, Libya, the Sudan, Algeria and Morocco, were the school curricula. Added to this, there was the Arabization of text-books, an increased dependence on native authorship, focusing on applied science, encouraging an increased dependence on laboratoy experiments in science teaching to the Arab

41. Analysis of Comparative Statistical Data in the Arab Countries, UNESCO, Paris, 1970, and Dr. Mohammad al-Ghannam: *Education in the Arab Countries in the Light of the Morocco Conference 1970,* Beirut, 1971.

heritage as well as patriotic and Pan-Arab subject, in the area of social sciences.

As for the educational scale, this was one of the areas on which the activities of the League of Arab States focused. The two conferences held in Baghdad (1964) and Kuwait (1968) resulted in a resolution to standardize the educational scale of the Arab states on the basis of the 6-3-3- pattern. Most Arab countries now adopt that system. There was also a significant and fundamental change in the concept of inspection which, after the Second World War, replaced the system of educational supervision. On the other hand, the question of gifted and backward children came in for a great deal of attention on the part of education officials in the Arab world. Arab educational relations embarked on a new stage in the course of that period. Six cultural conferences were held from 1947 through 1964. The first was held in Lebanon (2 September 1947) to deal with the Minimun of Joint Arab Education. The second was held in Alexandria (22 August 1950) and dealt with General, University and Post-Graduate Education. The third conference was held in Baghdad (18 November 1957) and reconsidered the issues discussed in the first meeting which was held in Lebanon. The fourth was held in Damascus (5 September 1959) and studied the question of National Pedagogics in General Education Among the Arab Countries. The fifth was held in Rabat (July 1961) to complement the researches of the preceding conferences. The sixth was held in Algiers (4 February 1964) and studied the question of School Examinations and Their Role in Promoting the Acquisition of Knowledge and Student Orientation.

In addition to cultural conferences, a number of meetings were held by Arab ministers of education, in Cairo (1953) and Morocco (1970). Committees charged with the standardization of the curricula of Arab general education also met in Cairo (1965). A seminar was organized in Amman (1972) to review curricula of secondary education.

As regards the quantitative development of Arab education, the annual growth rate of the global number of students in all Arab countries rose to 24,9% over the years 1945-1950, 38.5% over the years 1950-1960 and levelled out at 27,4% over the years 1960-1970. The annual growth rate of female students rose to 22,2% over the years 1945-1950, 24.5% over the years 1950-1960 and 26.6% over the years 1960-1970.

Estimates indicate that enrolments in secondary education will reach the 7 million mark by 1980 (i.e. 31,3% of those in the secondary school age group) as against 3 million in 1970 (18%) and only one million in 1960 (9%).

C. In the area of *university education*, we note the following indicators:

1. A marked increase in the number of Arab universities: from only 9 universities in the pre-war era, to 22 at the end of the fifties, to 41 in 1974. This is a 456% increase. Most Arab countries now have their universities and the number of university faculties has correspondingly registered a significant increase.

2. A marked development of educational targets. Arab universities now aim at targets which serve the

interests of society and satisfy the needs of economic and social development.

3. A marked quantitative expansion in university education and the enrolment of increasing numbers of students. Whereas the total number of university students in the Arab world did not exceed an estimated 10,322, it has now risen to 537,321. This is an increase of 5206% over the base year.

Moreover, univesity education is now accessible to students from every social background.

4. A marked increase in the number of female students. Their ratio rose from the meagre pre-war 4% to 14.1% at the end of the fifties, to 25% in the seventies.

5. Though the humanities still attract the majority of students, there is a marked and increasing preferences in favour of the physical sciences.

6. More opportunities of enrolment in Arab universities for Arab students from countries which still do not have their own universities.

7. An increased focusing on post-graduate studies. This is reflected in increased enrolments and a tendency to focus on researches in the physical sciences and their applications.

8. A constantly increasing number of graduates and an increasing number of educational missions to the Socialist countries.

9. A constant increase in the numbers of university teaching staffs. Their ratio at present (1973) to the number of students is 1:17 as compared with 1:26, in France, 1:9, in Britain, 1:13 in the USA, 1:91, in Rumania and 1:13, in Bulgaria (1967).

Conclusion

The Arab Homeland and the Issue of War and Peace

Even a cursory glance at the facts set out in the preceding chapters would suffice to lead us to a fundamental conclusion, namely, that the Arab homeland is in the throes of rebirth. Arab society is emerging from the enforced hibernation of century upon century of foreign domination which resulted in the despoilation of its land and resources, the sapping of its will and the near-obliteration of its identity. Arab society is also shedding its economic, social and cultural backwardness and catching up with the march of the modern world from which it has been excluded, until recently, by the unholy alliance of its enemies. The Arab world has entered the age of technology and socialism. It is also facing up to its partition and segmentation in a determined drive to achieve unity, cohesion, integration and equilibrium, all of which are essential prerequisites of Arab revival. Arab society is thus moving within the

framework of the progressive rising tide of humanity. It is progressing in the context of the logic of this age which has been shaped by the forces of progress in the post-war world and which may be summed up in three main currents:

— liberation and freedom for the world's peoples;

— the modern technological revolution, coupled with socialism; and

— the amalgamation of human communities into a large whole that is capable of guaranteeing the most favourable conditions for the enrichment and increased prosperity of peoples' lives.

The only real meaning of "progress" in times of rebirth (the rebirth of peoples) is the building of peace. However, the logic of history always imposed the clash of the factors of rebirth with those which are inimical to it, thus making for war between the builders of peace and peoples' enemies.

The Arab nation is struggling for its legitimate rights: liberation, unity and socialism. It has never been the aggressor. However, those who abhor the very thought of Arab renaissance, covet the Arab nation's land, oil and natural wealth and regard the possibility of its unity and liberation and the aspiration of its toiling masses to build socialism as direct threats to their interests, are determined to stand in the face of Arab renaissance and forever keep the Arab people shackled to the factors which, for centuries, have caused the backwardness of the Arab homeland and wasted much of the Arabs' energies in the interests of colonialism, imperialism and zionism.

The enemies of Arab revolution impose on the

Arab people an unending war in which the Arabs have no interest whatever. Hence our nation is compelled, just exactly as the peoples of the Soviet Union, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Korea and Cuba, etc., were forced, to build peace while defending itself against aggression. The Arab nation is no making war. It rejects war if war means aggression against the rights of others and the violation of the progressive values of humanity. It, like any other nation, has the right and the human and material capabilities to repulse aggression and retrieve its historic and natural rights. Hence, the struggle of the masses of the Arab people in the present phase is distinguished from the activities of its enemies by the fact that it is on the side of the real values of civilization against the enemies of the progress of mankind, namely, imperialism, zionism and the forces of reaction which are gathered together in a ferocious aggressive alliance and which do their utmost to undermine the efforts of the world's peoples to build peace.

War, as a phenomenon, expresses the residual effects of the past phases of history, when societies were under the heel of the exploiting and despotic classes, regimes and organizations, which sucked its life blood in the absence of awareness among the masses.

Revolutions have been the just retort, throughout history, to the scourge of war. Revolutions, which bespeak the vigilance of peoples and which were all too intermittent and far between, have become in our age, the age of socialism and the awakening of the toiling nations, a permanent fabric of social change, and perpetual revolution has become the protective

shield against war because it embraced the whole world and created between all the world's militant peoples, nations and classes a spontaneous unity which is beginning to organize itself and become organic. This is the meaning of the sum-total of the thirty post-war years of man's life. The growth of African solidarity and the solidarity between the struggle of Asia and Africa and that of Latin America, in addition to the Peace Conferences and the emergence of the Non-Alignment Bloc: all this had a preliminary result, namely, that the militant solidarity of the world's peoples has begun to constitute an increasingly important factor in guaranteeing the success of the Third World's revolutions, hand in hand with the increasing support and solidarity of the Socialist world. Hence the success of the revolution of Cuba, Vietnam, Korea, Cambodia, Iraq and Algeria, vis-à-vis the forces of colonialism and imperialism.

The world of peace, today, is stronger than the world of war. However, the world's peoples realize that such a gigantic endeavour necessitates a great many sacrifices and tremendous effort on their part and, in that knowledge, they pursue their march along that road which leads to the final and decisive victory of the world of peace.

The Arab nation, in its present struggle against the imperialist-zionist-reactionary alliance, finds itself faced with an uphill climb along the path of real peace, the path of peoples' triumph, of the victory of right over wrong and the values of civilization over the forces of evil and brutality and the ultimate victory of the forces of peace over the forces of war, aggression, usurpation and oppression.

The events of the post-Second World War period have demonstrated that the Arab homeland is marching along the path of renaissance and that it will be the burial ground of the enemies of peace and a launching site for the new values of human progress.

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